Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXI, Issue No. 68 | TUESDAY MARCH 22, 2011 | www.saipantribune.com | 50¢

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Do you support the proposal to allow tsunami victims in Japan to temporarily relocate to the CNMI?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

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A storm bearing rain and heavy snow marks the first day of spring with a bang.

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The toll of Japan's triple disaster comes into clearer focus, with more than 18,000 people dead.

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Gadhafi vowed a "long war" as allied forces launch a second night of strikes on Libya.

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US Labor seeks to amend H-2B rule

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The U.S. Department of Labor is proposing to amend its regulations to improve its H-2B temporary non-agricultural worker program in the U.S. and territories like Guam and the CNMI.

See US LABOR on Page 4

Economic restoration summit begins today

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

A two-day Economic Restoration Summit opens today, taking aim at the viability of agriculture, aquaculture, call/data centers, education tourism, and eco-tourism as "alternative" industries in the CNMI.

The summit proper starts at 9am today at the Saipan World Resort in Susupe, but registration starts at 7:45am.

It will be video-teleconferenced live to the Northern Marianas College campuses on Rota and Tinian.

Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos encourages

See ECONOMIC on Page 4

Oldest person in the CNMI, Nan Beck, passes away

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

Matsunaga

The oldest person in the CNMI, Elizabeth Matsunaga, was surrounded by family members when she passed away peacefully on March 15. She was 97.

Fondly known as Nan Beck, Matsunaga was born on July 31, 1913, and was the last of 13 siblings to depart this life.

Based on Japanese custom, Matsunaga believed she was already 98 years old before she passed away since it is believed that the time in the womb is taken into account when counting someone's age.

Although Matsunaga bore only a son, Francisco "Minoru" Matsunaga

See OLDEST on Page 4

STARTING 'EM YOUNG CLARISSA V. DAVID
With the supervision of Forestry trainee Thelma Taitano, a young girl shovels soil to cover the roots of a newly planted tree during yesterday's tree planting activity at the Brilliant Star Montessori School. The activity was part of celebrations for World Forestry Day.

See story on Page 6

CNMI-bound parcels, cargo undergo extra checks for radiation

» EPA expert sets up radiation device on Saipan
» Admin to ask for fixed radiation monitors in CNMI

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

CNMI-bound mail and cargo are now undergoing additional checks for radiation in Guam, to allay fears related to the quake-damaged nuclear power plant reactors in Japan.

Press secretary Angel Demapan said yesterday that once the parcels and cargo checked in Guam reach Saipan, they are also subjected to inspections by federal and local authorities here using portable radiation devices.

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IT&E Life in Motion
A PASSION FOR GIVING
Japan Tsunami Relief Donation
See inside for more details.
American Red Cross
IP&E

Local

4 senators wrap up meetings in Washington, DC

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Four CNMI senators capped their weeklong meetings in Washington, D.C. with a Thursday meeting with homeland security and health representatives.

The series of meetings in the nation's capital began on March 14, with the senators presenting the CNMI Senate's recommendation to Congress to grant foreign workers who have been in the CNMI for at least 10 years by May 2008 a status similar to those granted to Freely Associated States citizens.

They presented the Senate recommendation to House Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans and Insular Affairs chair John Fleming (R-LA) and ranking member Gregorio Kilili Sablan (Ind-MP).

Senate Vice President Jude Hofschneider (R-Tinian) reiterated that the presentation of the recommendation was the primary purpose for the trip, but the group said they were able to seek audience with federal officials and representatives on a host of issues such as on health, transportation and immigration.

"We did what we set out to do," Senate President Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota) told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday afternoon.

Besides Manglona and Hofschneider, the others who visited Washington, D.C. were Sen. Ralph Torres (R-Saipan), Sen. Frank Cruz (R-Tinian), and Senate legal counsel Matthew Meyer.

Only Manglona is back in the CNMI since early Sunday morning.

The last meetings in the nation's capital were held on Thursday, the group said in a statement.

Health center for Kagman

That day, they met with Homeland Security Assistant Secretary Elizabeth Markey and with representatives of the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and the Public Health Service at the Department of Health and Human Services on lowering costs and improving the quality of health care in the CNMI.

Torres, who chairs the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare, said they encouraged health officials to move quickly to find a way for Medicare patients in the CNMI to be able to use services in the Philippines.

The senators said DHHS officials also brought up the CNMI's application for a community health center for Kagman.

The CNMI has made multiple applications for the center, but none has been successful.

But with the assistance of Sablan's office, the CNMI received an $80,000 grant to hire a professional service to write the community health center request, the senators said.

"A decision on that most recent application is expected soon. HHS could not say yes or no on the community health center application. But let's just say they had a smile on their faces," Torres said.

Tinian and Rota senators said if the Kagman health center application is approved, then Rota and Tinian will also push for the same health centers on their islands.

Medicaid funding will go from some $5.5 million to over $20 million by 2019. Torres said it's a relief that the matching fund requirement is changing from 50-50 to 55-45.

Foreign worker regulations

On Thursday, senators traveled to the headquarters of the Department of Homeland Security to meet with Assistant Secretary Elizabeth Markey and staff from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

They discussed the yet-to-be published regulations governing foreign workers in the CNMI and what will happen to them after November 2011.

The senators, in their statement, said the DHS regulations have been delayed by Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's lawsuit against DHS, creating uncertainty for business investors and workers alike.

"All they can say is the rules still need to go to the Office of Management and Budget for final review. With the lawsuit they have to be sure to cross all the 't's and dot all the 'i's, they said," Cruz said.

Cruz also told DHS officials about the difficulty of hiring foreign workers from China to build a casino on Tinian. China is not among the countries able to receive H worker visas under the normal processes of USCIS, making this process difficult and uncertain.

Earlier last week, the senators worked on air, sea, and surface transportation issues with officials of the Department of Transportation, and experts from the Congressional Research Service.

The senators wanted to learn about ways to increase competition in the airline industry, and the need for ferry services between Guam, Rota, Tinian, and Saipan.

STEM FAIR COMMITTEE
Members of the 4th Annual Science Technology Electronic Mathematics Fair committee pose for group photo after the successful event at the Marianas High School Gymnasium last Sunday morning. The three-day occasion selected the top five students that will represent the Commonwealth in the science fair competition in Guam this May.
MONETH G. DEPOSA

Landowner's lawsuit vs CNMI govt dismissed

The federal court dismissed yesterday a lawsuit filed by a landowner who alleged that the CNMI government failed to provide her a fair and just compensation for the parcels of land it acquired from her some 15 years ago.

U.S. District Court for the NMI visiting judge John A. Houston granted the CNMI government's motion to dismiss Mary Ann Frink's lawsuit.

"Here, it is undisputed that plaintiff did not bring an inverse condemnation claim in a CNMI court prior to filing this federal action," Houston said.

Accordingly, the judge said, Frink's claim is not ripe and therefore not justiciable in federal court at this time.

Houston dismissed the lawsuit without prejudice. This means Frink may re-file a new suit on the same claim in the future.

In a footnote to his ruling, Houston noted that because he is dismissing the complaint on ripeness grounds, he finds it unnecessary to address the merits of the CNMI's remaining arguments.

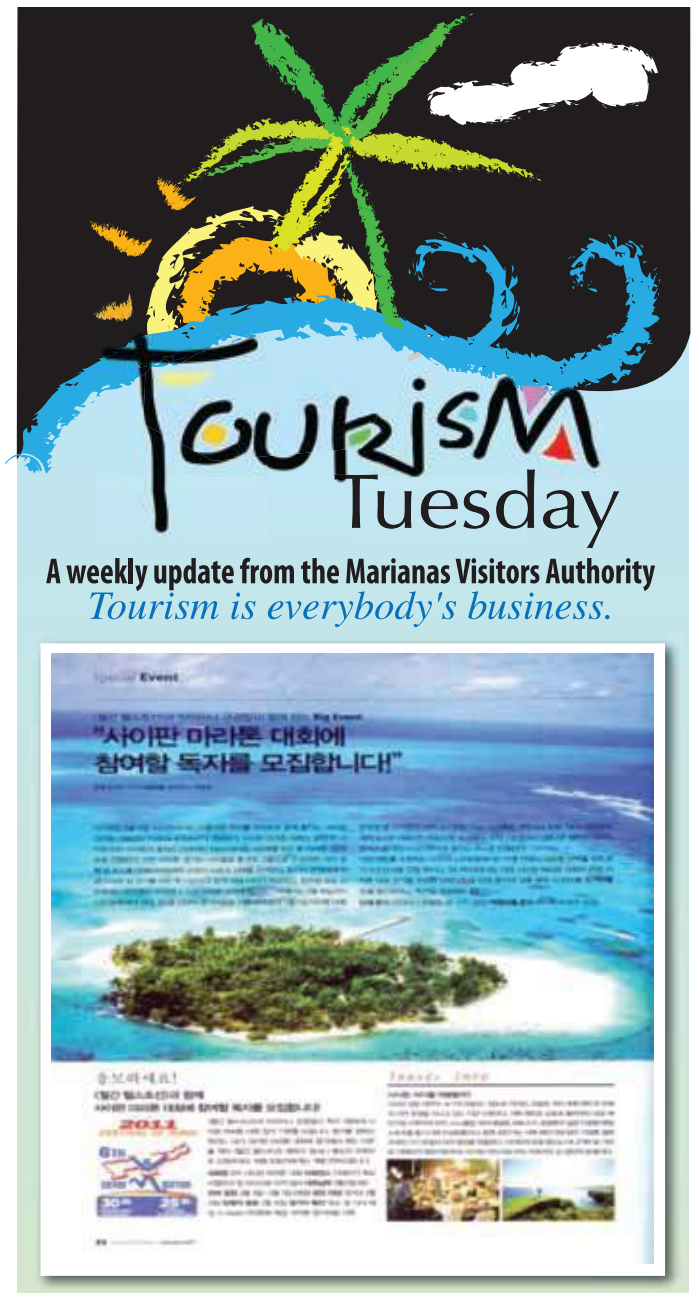
Frink, through counsel Lilian A. Tenorio, sued the CNMI government through its Department of Public Lands and Department of Public Works for breach of the promise to pay, for the unlawful taking of her property without compensation, for conversion, and unjust enrichment.

Frink, who is now residing in Arizona, owns a property in San Vicente. The CNMI government seized the property in August 2000 so it could build a road and utilities on it under the land compensation program.

The CNMI government moved to dismiss the complaint by raising three arguments:

- Frink has no cause of action arising directly under the U.S. Constitution.
- Frink has no cause of action against the CNMI under the U.S. Constitution.
- Frink has not exhausted available state court procedures.

In granting the motion, Houston ruled that under the facts presented, he finds that the CNMI has an available and adequate procedure for obtaining just compensation. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***



Health Chosun Features March "Festival of Runs"

While most of the March 5, 2011, Saipan Marathon media coverage came from Japanese publications and television stations, Korean media and tour groups also capitalized on the opportunity to promote the Northern Marianas through the event.

Korean magazine **Health Chosun** featured the **"Festival of Runs"**—another name for the **Saipan Marathon, Half Marathon, and 10K**—on one full page of the its February 2011 issue. The goal of the consumer promotion was to expose runners and their families to race course set among the beauty and attractions of the Northern Marianas. The title of the article, "Travel to Saipan with Tour Express" targeted opinion leaders and housewives in their 30s to 50s. The **Marianas Visitors Authority** supported the promotion with a Saipan tour.

A longer, 4-page article featuring race results and other Saipan features will be covered in the May 2011 issue of Health Chosun.

HAFA ADAI & TIROW WAY
MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY

This Tourism Tuesday space is provided by Saipan Tribune

EPA issues another warning to CUC

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has issued another warning to the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., saying it will take "necessary action" if CUC cannot immediately remove oil contamination at the two power plants in Lower Base.

In its response, CUC executive director Abe Malae said they want to clean up power plants 1 and 2, but at this time, the utilities agency lacks the financial means to immediately move forward with the plan.

Michelle Rogow, EPA on-scene coordinator, informed Malae in a letter dated March 10, 2011, that CUC may be held liable for the cost of any response action EPA performs at the site and any potential penalties.

Rogow said the federal on-scene coordinator has already reviewed the technical report of power plants 1 and 2 dated Feb. 25, 2011, and has evaluated the magnitude and severity of the discharge or threat to public health or welfare or the environment.

Based upon this evaluation, Rogow said, CUC was asked to respond within seven days to confirm its intent to immediately perform the most appropriate remedial alternative and other actions necessary to protect waters/shorelines.

If CUC agrees to perform the cleanup, EPA will provide its comments on the report, Rogow said.

Rogow said the cleanup will include, but not be limited to containment of oil and protection of waters/shorelines; source identification and control; removal of oil from waters/shorelines; natural resources damages assessments; and other mitigative measures as determined by EPA.

"If you are willing to undertake a cleanup, your actions may be monitored by EPA pursuant to stipulated order number two," Rogow told Malae.

In CUC's response dated March 17, 2011, Malae said that, while the CNMI Public Utilities Commission has generally approved stipulated order projects, it has reserved its right to set a price ceiling. Therefore, Malae said, CUC cannot make any financial commitment of over $350,000 in the absence of grant funding without PUC's approval.

"CUC will continue in good faith to make every effort to fulfill its responsibilities under the stipulated orders and federal environmental laws," the CUC executive director said.

EPA legal counsel Bradley R. O'Brien submitted Rogow's and Malae's letters on Saturday to the U.S. District Court for the NMI.

O'Brien filed the documents pursuant to the court's request for information during the Feb. 20, 2011, status conference, relating to projects or situations that it deemed priorities.

O'Brien said one of these situations relate to ongoing subsurface oil contamination at the Power Plants 1 and 2 facilities that "has reached or has threatened to reach the nearby Pacific Ocean."

In November 2010, EPA had warned CUC that it may need to take action to "protect the waters of the United States" if CUC cannot immediately clean up the oil contamination at the two power plants.

CUC then replied to EPA that recent testing of the areas for which EPA has expressed concern shows that no oil is seeping into the ocean.

'Order amid aftershocks'

Despite the hundreds of aftershocks in the wake of a devastating 9.0-magnitue earthquake and tsunami on March 11, Japan—or at least Tokyo—remains an orderly place, said Senate President Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota).

Manglona spent a four-hour layover at the Narita Airport in Tokyo, Japan on Saturday, on his way back to Saipan from Washington, D.C. via Detroit.

While waiting for his connecting flight, Manglona experienced what he describes as a "major earthquake—you would think it's not just an aftershock."

"The ground was really shaking. I saw people running out of shops. People were still nervous. But Japanese people are used to earthquakes and everything was still orderly. That's really something," Manglona told *Saipan Tribune*.

He said people exited the shops at the airport, and the shops closed for 10 to 15 minutes.

"I think that's a standard procedure. They closed the shops for 10 to 15 minutes, and reopened when they thought the quake was over," he said.

Manglona said he was impressed with how the Japanese cope with disasters.

"It's as if there's no disaster. Things are orderly, and people are calm," he said.

The Senate president, who was on Rota yesterday afternoon, said the Senate stands ready to assist the administration and the community in their relief efforts to Japan. ***(Haidee V. Eugenio)***

Reksid allegedly wired $300K to a person in Ivory Coast, Nigeria

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The U.S. government has charged Franz B. Reksid, the Department of Public Lands special assistant to the secretary, with seven counts of wire fraud for allegedly sending part of the $300,000 he borrowed from relatives, associates, and friends, to a person in West Africa.

The superseding indictment filed by the U.S. government against the 70-year-old Reksid in the U.S. District Court for the NMI on Friday contains seven counts of wire fraud and one count of bribery concerning a program receiving federal funds.

According to the superseding indictment, from January 2009 to August 2009, Reksid borrowed money from friends, associates, and relatives, by telling them different stories about why he needed the money.

For example, he represented to some that he had substantial sums in a bank account in New York, and he needed to pay some attorney fees to "unlock" it.

To others, Reksid represented that he needed the money for his wife's medical or other family expenses.

Reksid also allegedly promised most, if not all, of the victims that he would soon have money, and would pay them back "in a few days."

According to assistant U.S. attorney Eric O'Malley in the superseding indictment, Reksid did not have substantial amounts of money in a New York bank account, or any other account; he needed little, if any, of the money to pay for his wife's medical or other family expenses.

Instead, O'Malley said, Reksid himself wired, or on several occasions had one of his victims, Gui Qin Che, wire on his behalf, most if not all of the money to locations in Africa in the apparent hope of obtaining a windfall from persons he met via the Internet.

O'Malley said that Reksid did not reveal these facts to the victims from whom he obtained money.

The prosecutor said Reksid has not obtained a windfall, and has only paid back a small fraction of the money.

"Over the course of the scheme, he asked for and received money from at least 14 victims, some on multiple occasions," O'Malley said.

The individual amounts given ranged from several hundred, to tens of thousands of dollars; the total amount exceeded $300,000.

According to court documents, Reksid wire transferred from the CNMI to Abidjan, Ivory Coast, $5,000 on Jan. 21, 2009; $6,000 on Feb. 10, 2009; $3,500 on March 10, 2009; $5,500 on April 6, 2009; and $2,500 on Jan. 1, 2009.

Reksid also asked on his behalf Gui Qin Che to wire transfer from the CNMI to Lagos, Nigeria, $4,500 on April 18, 2009, and $3,000 on Aug. 27, 2009.

Reksid also allegedly solicited $3,000 from the owner of a business that was seeking to obtain a contract with DPL.

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**Donation period for these offers ends on March 31, 2011 unless otherwise extended.

Inos: Desk audit findings on DPS in FY2012

Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos said yesterday that the administration will implement at the Department of Public Safety the desk audit recommendations, which will be reflected in the fiscal year 2012 budget submissions.

The Management Analysis Inc. found, among other things, that DPS' Office of the Commissioner is "top heavy with a span of control that is cumbersome and difficult to coordinate."

But Inos said not all of the MAI recommendations will be implemented.

He said DPS is also undergoing management transition.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial appointed former Corrections Commissioner Ray Mafnas as DPS commissioner on Friday, the same day the governor asked Santiago Tudela to vacate his post.

Mafnas will serve in an acting capacity until the Senate confirms his appointment.

Senate President Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota) separately said yesterday that as soon as the governor submits an appointment letter, especially for a critical post as a DPS commissioner, then the Senate will immediately act on the matter.

The Senate Executive Appointments and Governmental Investigations will have to conduct a public hearing on Mafnas' appointment, and then recommend either the confirmation or rejection of that appointment.

Press secretary Angel Demapan confirmed yesterday that Arnold Seman is the current acting director of the Department of Corrections.

"As the acting director, he will be in charge of the Department of Corrections until such time that an appointment is made by the governor," Demapan said.

Inos could not say the reason why the Fitial administration asked Tudela to vacate his post, and replace him with Mafnas.

"I think there's been some discussions about change in management for whatever reason so after that happened, we need to address about transition—the management—into something where we would need a new commissioner. And at the moment, Mr. Ray Mafnas has been tapped to fill in that gap. That's what I can say at this point," he told reporters yesterday.

Inos said it's the administration's hope that Mafnas could do a much better job to manage DPS, but he said this is not to say that Tudela did not a good job. He thanked Tudela for his service as DPS commissioner, a position he served even after he had already retired.

Tudela was not paid a salary as DPS commissioner; he was receiving his retirement benefits.

"We're going under several transitions, including DPS. We're looking at essentially trying to implement the recommendations of MAI as well. So there's going to be a lot of changes as a result of that," Inos said.

MAI said DPS' Police Division is "over-staffed and fragmented with the Criminal Investigations Bureau functioning as a separate and equal division with the Police Division."

It said the Patrol and Traffic Sections within the Police Division "have overlapping and similar duties and responsibilities," and the Bureau of Motor Vehicles is also "overstaffed based on the available workload data."

MAI also said that the career progression within DPS is stagnated, "thus contributing to employee discontent and declining morale." ***(Haidee V. Eugenio)***

OLDEST

From Page 1

who passed away in 1996, she also had a reared-daughter, Board of Education member Lucia Blanco-Maratita.

'Caring and loving'

Blanco-Maratita, who came to live with Matsunaga when she was 3 years old, described her mother as very caring and loving to her family.

"I know that my mom enjoyed her grand- and great-grandchildren. She would hug and kiss them and was very loving to them," she told *Saipan Tribune*.

Blanco-Maratita said Matsunaga raised her six grandchildren with Minoru: Thomas, George, Ray, Elizabeth, Francis, and Devine Matsunaga.

"She was very caring, loving, and forgiving person even though we may have given her many challenges raising us; she always saw the goodness in each of us," she added.

'Avid horticulturist'

Blanco-Maratita disclosed that her mother was an avid horticulturist, having spent their Saturday morning on gardening projects or scouting for unique ornamental plants all over Saipan.

"She had a green thumb and seemed to be at peace whenever I watched her water the plants in the early morning when the dew is still on the grass," she said. "Seeing my mom with her plants and hearing the rooster crow are the usual sights and sounds of early Saturday mornings for me."

Tour guide

According to Blanco-Maratita, Matsunaga also served as a tour guide for Japanese tourists from the Wakai Nekko No Kai ships.

She said their family hosted countless tourists who enjoyed local foods and gave them ship tours and Kendo lessons or the Japanese martial art of sword fighting.

Matsunaga also helped Japanese repatriation groups who came on island to gather remains of their war dead. "I recall that there were many skeletons around her Susupe property and that it was the site of Camp Susupe."

Business oriented

According to Blanco-Maratita, Matsunaga was always into all kinds of businesses, including a scrap metal, restaurant, and animal raising business.

She recalled that when she was a child, Matsunaga used to have a restaurant along Beach Road, right where Music And is situated.

Matsunaga also became one of the first entrepreneurs in the scrap metal industry when she built her own business in the '60s.

"Every day, many people would come to the house with loads of scrap metal that people would gather from around the island, usually metal left from [World War II]," said Blanco-Maratita. "I remember seeing many bullet shells, of all different sizes, from a few inches to 2-3 feet."

Politics

Blanco-Maratita said Matsunaga also had "a very keen interest" in politics, which she became involved with after her scrap metal business closed down.

She remembered attending with Matsunaga—who was a member of the Popular Party during that time—many campaigns and public education sessions related to political status negotiations.

"I recall many evenings listening to the politicians, not really understanding the magnitude of the events at that time; just that we were listening to some very passionate, forceful and loud speakers," she added.

Commitment to education

One of her fondest memories of her mother, Blanco-Maratita said, was her commitment to have her family finish their education with excellence.

She felt her mother's support by giving her a quiet place to study and not bothering her with house chores once she started doing her schoolwork.

"My mom will be missed very much," said Blanco-Maratita, adding that her mother taught them a lot of important lessons in life.

Her strong faith and belief in the power of prayer helped her prepare for her death. "In fact, she told us she was ready to go that night before she passed away," Blanco-Maratita disclosed.

The Matsunaga family is holding a 7pm rosary every night at the Mount Carmel Cathedral. Funeral services begin at 8am on Thursday, March 24, with a Mass at 10am followed by interment at the Chalan Kanoa cemetery.

ECONOMIC

From Page 1

the business community and other stakeholders to take part in the summit, which is a follow-up to the 2009 summit.

The summit is made possible through an $85,000 Rural Business Enterprise Grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

This year's summit will include guest presentations for industries identified in the first Economic Restoration Summit in 2009 and are being followed up on this year.

Keynote speaker, presenters

Jim Arenovski of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce said the CNMI is lucky to have experts in the five industries to be in the same room for the summit.

Muliufi "Mufi" Hannemann, the 12th mayor of the City and County of Honolulu, Hawaii, will be the keynote speaker.As mayor, Hannemann led the development of Oahu's first rail transit system, which is poised to break ground soon. His strong emphasis on public safety led to Honolulu being named by the FBI as one of America's safest big cities, summit organizers said.

Frank J. Cruz, a horticulturist with the University of Guam's Agriculture and Natural Resources Department, will make a presentation on agriculture.

Dr. Addison Lee Lawrence, a professor and regents fellow at Texas A&M University, will be the presenter on aquaculture.

In the area of call centers, summit organizers invited Jack Johnston, who has more than 10 years of call center development and general management with the same family of companies under such brands as SBC, CellularONE, Ameritech, BellSouth, Cingular, and AT&T.

Dr. Linda J. Cox will talk about eco-tourism. She has served as a community economic development specialist in the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources at the University of Hawaii in Manoa for over 27 years.

Jill Nickels, the owner of On The Edge Travel, will be the presenter for education tourism. Nickels works to develop marketing plans, travel solutions and manages agency operations specializing in educational travel.

Acting Commerce Secretary Sixto Igisomar said the second day of the summit will also be important because it allows participants to break into individual industry groups to develop a specific plan of action to determine industry viability and needs for future growth and development.

The second day will conclude with group presentations of the findings of each industry's breakout session.

RADIATION

From Page 1

Demapan, a member of the CNMI Nuclear Task Force, said there are adequate checks in place to monitor incoming items and passengers for radiation.

He said the task force received information yesterday morning that the Guam National Guard deployed their service members to the post office and airport in Guam for additional screening of cargo and mail parcels.

"That's another safeguard that's good for Guam and good for the Commonwealth. Because those parcels transit there and come here," he told reporters yesterday.

He said the additional checks will not result in delays in the arrival of parcels and cargo to the CNMI.

Demapan reiterated that based on communication with federal authorities, the CNMI remains free of any radioactive materials from Japan.

At the same time, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Radiological Emergency Response Team commander Sam Poppell arrived on Saipan Sunday night, from Guam.

Demapan said Poppell set up a RADNet deployable unit on Saipan yesterday, after meeting with the task force in the morning. Poppell will be on Saipan for a few days to also train local personnel on the use of the device.

The RADNet is used to monitor radiation in the air.

Poppell also set up a similar RADNet device in Guam on Friday and the first readings showed no harmful levels of radiation detected.

The RadNet monitor has three components that look for evidence of radioactivity. Once the readings are analyzed, they will be posted online so that CNMI residents can see them as well at http://www.epa.gov/radiation/rert/radnet-data.html.

The press secretary said the CNMI will also be taking seawater and rainwater samples to be sent to the U.S. for radiation analysis.

Fixed unit in CNMI

Demapan said it will be up to the U.S. EPA whether the portable RADNet device will stay in the CNMI or not, after the Japanese nuclear problems are addressed.

But he said that, with over 100 fixed radiation monitors throughout continental U.S., the Fitial administration is looking to pursue having a similar fixed monitor stationed in the CNMI.

Demapan said this would need U.S. Congress action. He said the Fitial administration will communicate with Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan (Ind-MP) on this.

"I think that will be some kind of security assurance to the community, in the event we have to go through this whole procedure again in the future," he added.

US LABOR

From Page 1

The H-2B program allows the entry of foreign workers into the United States on a temporary basis when qualified U.S. workers are not available and when the employment of those foreign workers will not adversely affect the wages and working conditions of similarly employed U.S. workers.

By law, only up to 66,000 visas a year are allowed under the H-2B program.

Published in the March 18 edition of the *Federal Register*, the proposed rule includes changes to several aspects of the program to ensure that U.S. workers receive the same level of protections and benefits as temporary foreign workers recruited under the H-2B program. It also seeks to provide better access for employers with legitimate labor needs.

The deadline for comments is May 17, 2011.

Members of the public are invited to submit comments on the proposed rule via the federal e-rulemaking portal at http://www.regulations.gov.

The proposed rule would create an H-2B registration process that would allow employers to conduct labor market tests closer to their date of need before applying for a certification. This is expected to streamline and improve the program for employers.

It would also eliminate job contractors as users of the program.

U.S. Labor Secretary Hilda Solis, in a statement, said it is important for U.S. workers to receive access to all jobs and that the H-2B program is used as it was intended, as the economy continues to recover.

"At the same time, workers employed through the H-2B program must be treated fairly," Solis said.

U.S. Labor also proposes to improve U.S. workers' access to jobs and increase worker protections by creating a national job registry for all H-2B job postings, requiring employers to provide documentation that they have taken appropriate steps to recruit U.S. workers rather than permitting employers to attest to such compliance, and enhancing transparency by requiring employers to submit agency agreements and through the use of foreign recruiters.

It also proposes to reinstate the role of state workforce agencies in providing expertise on local labor market conditions and recruitment patterns, and increase the amount of time during which U.S. workers must be recruited.

U.S. Labor also proposes to extend H-2B program benefits to workers employed alongside those recruited under the H-2B program, require employers to pay transportation costs and other fees, and enhance enforcement by giving the department's Wage and Hour Division independent debarment authority.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The five students of Yonsei Academy who won gold and silver awards in the recent Tumon Bay Music Festival. They include Kang San Kim, A Young Kim, Kyung Chan Choi, Ji Min Lee, and So Jin Kim.

Yonsei Academy pianists win 3 gold, 2 silver medals in Guam music fest

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Five students of Yonsei Academy brought home three gold and two silver medals from the recently concluded Tumon Bay Music Festival in Guam.

Kang San Kim, A Young Kim, Kyung Chan Choi, Ji Min Lee, and So Jin Kim—all first-timers to the competition—went on to win gold and silver medals in their solo piano performances.

Kang San Kim bagged the gold medal for her rendition of Beethoven's *Piano Sonata No. 14 Moonlight 3rd Movement*.

"At first I couldn't believe it before I saw the result for myself. There my name was, clearly written on the showcase performance list. I am very happy for the good result. When I was invited to Guam for the showcase performance, I felt like as if I was a real musician. I did not expect any of this and now I know what the piano means to me more than just an instrument. I am very thankful to my piano teacher who helped me to develop my talent. She encouraged me and supported me with my piano playing," Kang San Kim told *Saipan Tribune.*

A Young Kim, the youngest of the five from Yonsei Academy, won a gold medal for her interpretation of Chopin's *Fantasie Impromptu Op. 66*.

"When I heard the news from my piano teacher that I won the gold medal, I couldn't believe it. I was extremely happy. I did not expect it because there were so many participants who performed very well in the contest," A Young Kim said.

Kyung Chan Choi, also a gold medalist, played Chopin's *Nocturne Op. 9 No. 2* and showcased his winning piece during the festival's command performance. "I was very happy that I got good result. For this year's TBMF, I realized that how much I love the piano."

Silver medalists Ji Min Lee and So Jin Kim said the honors were unexpected. Kim played Chopin's *Black Keys Etude Op. 10 No. 5* while Lee performed Beethoven's *Piano Sonata No. 14 Moonlight 1st and 2nd movement*.

Yonsei Academy is a school of piano, violin, and cello. Every Sunday, the school's piano teacher, Young Mi Han, and her students play music for patients at the Commonwealth Health Center.

Young Mi Han graduated from Gyeonsang National University in Korea with a bachelor's degree in music education. Prior to coming to Saipan, she taught music in high school in Korea for 13 years.

"I am very pleased for the good result because they did not have enough time to practice for the competition. Also for some, there was no piano available to practice so I had to make extra time for that particular student. I wish my students can be confident in music and find their talents not only in music but also in other subject. I wish they can grow into people who touch people's heart," she said.

US govt sues former owner of Shell Marianas

» For alleged violations of Clean Air Act

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The U.S. government is suing the former owner of Shell Marianas for alleged violations of the Clean Air Act at its bulk gasoline terminal in Puerto Rico, Saipan.

In the lawsuit it filed yesterday in federal court, the U.S. government alleges that Mariana Acquisition Corp. failed to equip its loading racks with pollution controls and to limit loading rack emissions.

The U.S. government asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to permanently stop MAC from operating its terminal in violation of the Clean Air Act and demanded civil penalties against MAC of up to $25,000 per day for each violation occurring on or before Jan. 30, 1997, and up to $27,500 per day for each violation that occurred between Jan. 30, 1997 and March 15, 2004.

The plaintiff also asked the court to assess civil penalties of up to $32,500 per day against MAC for each violation that occurred between March 16, 2004, and Jan. 12, 2009, and up to $37,500 per day for each violation that occurred after Jan. 12, 2009.

MAC owns and operates the bulk gasoline terminal, formerly referred to as the Shell Puerto Rico Terminal, on Industrial Drive in Puerto Rico, Saipan.

Since 1989, the MAC Terminal loading racks have been operating without a vapor collection system as required by the New Source Performance Standards requirements, the lawsuit states.

The complaint alleged that since 1989, MAC has failed to limit emissions from the loading of liquid product from the MAC Terminal loading racks into gasoline tank trucks to not more than 35 milligrams of total organic compounds per liter of gasoline loaded—as required by the NSPS.

The loading racks, the complaint said, do not have a vapor collection system and the uncontrolled emissions therefore greatly exceed 35 milligrams of total organic compounds per liter of gasoline loaded.

The lawyers that filed the lawsuit are U.S. Attorney for the Districts of Guam and the NMI Alicia Limtiaco, assistant U.S. attorney Mikel W. Schwab, Department of Justice's Environmental Enforcement Section deputy section chief Ellen M. Mahan, and DOJ's Environmental Enforcement Section's Andrew W. Ingersoll.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Saipan Mayor Donald G. Flores, third from right, shakes hands with Public Works Secretary Martin C. Sablan, P&A Corp. president Hong Kyun Kim, and Power Division manager Gary Camacho after signing a memorandum of agreement yesterday morning at the mayor's conference room.

Saipan Mayor signs MOA to address tree problem

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Saipan Mayor's Office and P&A Corp. inked yesterday a memorandum of agreement to address the removal or trimming of trees on island.

"Throughout the island, there's a lot of old trees that have branches about to fall down and block roads. There are also trees that block power lines. Community members who call us day by day can now receive assistance through this agreement," Saipan Mayor Donald G. Flores told *Saipan Tribune.*

With the agreement, the Mayor's Office is tasked to survey and identify public and private areas where tree removal and trimming work is needed.

According to Flores, P&A Corp. will provide the equipment and machineries required for the task for free.

The agreement identifies P&A Corp. as a privately-owned and operated company licensed to conduct business in the CNMI. Its business operations include recycling "green waste."

Flores said P&A Corp. can use the trimmed trees and tree branches to produce sawdust for agriculture and pig raising.

Yesterday's signing of agreement by Flores and P&A Corp. president Hong Kyun Kim was witnessed by Commonwealth Utilities Corp. power transmission and distribution manager Gary Camacho, Public Works Secretary Martin C. Sablan, and Saipan Higher Educational Financial Assistance administrator Henry Hofschneider.

According to Flores, they collaborated with CUC and DPW since both agencies are also involved in issues related to trees.

Hofschneider noted that the best part of the agreement is that it will be "at no cost to the Mayor's Office."

"The P&A Corp. is a big help in terms of the financial aspect of the issue since we don't have to deal with equipment costs," he added.

Public schools' 8th graders fail CCLHS benchmarks

» BOE increases credit requirement to improve ratings

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Eighth grade students in the CNMI's public junior high schools failed to meet the benchmarks set by the Public School System for its Chamorro, Carolinian Language Heritage Studies curriculum in school year 2009-2010.

To improve on the "significant low" performance, the Board of Education increased the CCLHS credit requirement from the present .05 credit to one full credit during last week's board meeting.

Based on the results of the 2009 8th grade Carolinian and Chamorro standard based assessment test, 76 percent of students who received Carolinian instructions failed to meet standards.

"The 8th grade Carolinian results show 8.18 percent of the ratings were in the advanced category, and 16.22 percent were in the proficient range. When added together, 24 percent of the benchmarks met or exceeded the standards. The other 76 percent did not meet the standards," the report to the Education Board states.

The 8th grade Chamorro results, on the other hand, show that only 10.94 percent were in the advanced category, and 17.21 percent were in the proficient range. When added together, only 28 percent met or exceeded the standards while 72 percent failed.

New policy

According to the board, there is a need to increase the CCLHS credit in junior high schools—from 0.5 to 1 credit—as a requirement for graduation to meet the PSS policy of having native language instructions in grades one through eight.

Currently, junior high schools require native language classes to be taught in either 7th or 8th grade for a semester. *Saipan Tribune* learned that all middle schools on three islands provide native language classes at the 8th grade level only.

The PSS report disclosed that during previous observations, CCLHS teachers taught on a rotating daily schedule (rotating between CCLHS, and wellness and health, journalism, agriculture, etc.). Teachers taught native languages for one semester while the other semester was for wellness and other electives. There were also teachers who taught native languages for the entire year because there were no other classes to place students in.

PSS said the increased credit requirement will also support the maintenance and preservation of the indigenous languages and culture.

"For us to pass on the cultural richness for generations to come, it has to survive within the people, community, and schools. The accountability and responsibility for its survival lies in our decisions," the board stated.

Brilliant Star students mark World Forestry Day with tree planting

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Young students of Brilliant Star Montessori School got their hands dirty yesterday by planting shrubs and trees on school grounds to mark World Forestry Day.

World Forestry Day is celebrated around the world every March 21 to observe the importance and benefits of forests and forestry to the community. The occasion also provides opportunities for people to learn how to manage and use forests sustainably.

The concept for the annual celebration originated during the 23rd General Assembly of the European Confederation of Agriculture in 1971.

About 70 students with ages ranging from 1 and a half to 9 years old from four different classes participated in the activity—a first for Brilliant Star Montessori School.

"It's a great opportunity for our school to plant more trees and be able to help the environment at the same time," principal Richard Sikkel told *Saipan Tribune*.

According to Sikkel, the idea came from their teachers who mentioned that having more trees within the school grounds would be beneficial for the school and the students.

Brilliant Star Montessori School lead teacher Rita Bonnici smiles at a student while holding the tree being planted by other students during their tree planting activity that marked World Forestry Day.
CLARISSA V. DAVID

"We thought to involve the students in the activity because in that way, they can take ownership of the trees they planted," he said.

Sikkel said the young students were very willing participants and even made the event a "green day" by wearing green shirts to school.

Sikkel said they plan to make the tree planting activity a regular event every World Forestry Day.

Sikkel added that Brilliant Star Montessori School also plans to start its own nursery where they intend to have an assortment of plants.

"We're grateful to the Forestry Division for their assistance and providing us what we planted today. They have very nice programs [that] are important for a small island like Saipan," he said.

Forestry assistance

Manny Pangelinan, acting CNMI forester, said he and four other staff—forestry technicians James Babauta and Jason Tenorio, forestry trainee Thelma Taitano, and Ray Guerrero of the Division of Agriculture Plant Industry—took time out of their schedules to assist in Brilliant Star's tree planting activity.

The Division of Forestry provided two ifil wood plants and 10 hibiscus plants for Brilliant Star.

"We're very happy to provide assistance to Brilliant Star and any urban settings within the community," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Pangelinan said the Forestry Division has been in partnership with various schools, government agencies, and other organizations in promoting tree planting activities during occasions celebrating environmental awareness such as World Forestry Day, Earth Day, and Arbor Day.

According to Pangelinan, tree planting activities highlight the significance of trees to people and the island.

"Trees are very important to us because they provide us landscape, shade, habitat for our wildlife, and it also cleans the air we breathe. Trees provide unlimited benefits," he said.

Pangelinan thanked the U.S. Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program for providing them grants to fund their various programs.

Those who are interested to have plants may contact the Division of Forestry at 256-3319 or 3320.

TAX ASSISTANCE SERVICES
(ALL KINDS OF TAXES)
LP ACCOUNTING
Rm. 608, 6th Floor Marianas Business Plaza
(formerly Nauro Building)
Business Hours: 8:00am - 5:45pm (Mon. - Sat.)
Tel: 234-3800, 285-3900
contact Loida or one of our friendly staffs

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP NO.: RFP11-DEQ-044
SUBMISSION: APRIL 06, 2011 TIME: 2:00 P.M.
"MARIANA ISLANDS BLEACHING RESPONSE FOR THE DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY"
THE SCOPE OF WORK FOR THIS PROJECT MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY, GUALO RAI CENTER, SUITE 101 FROM MONDAY TO FRIDAY, 7:30 A.M.-4:30 P.M., EXCEPT ON CNMI LEGAL HOLIDAYS.
ALL INQUIRIES SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO MR. FRANK M. RABAULIMAN, DIRECTOR OF DEQ AT (670) 664-8500 NO LATER THAN CLOSE OF BUSINESS, **MARCH 28, 2011.**
THIS IS A FEDERALLY FUNDED PROJECT; AS SUCH, LOCAL PREFERENCE *IS NOT AVAILABLE*, BECAUSE ITS USE IS PROHIBITED BY FEDERAL LAW GRANTING FUNDING FOR THIS PROJECT.
/s/ FRANK M. RABAULIMAN
DIRECTOR, DEQ
/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

DISCONNECTION NOTICE
IT&E would like to remind its customers that payments not received by close of business on **March 22**, will result in temporary suspension of all telephone services after 6:00 p.m. on that day. To prevent temporary suspension, customers must pay their bills on or before **March 22**.
THIS WILL BE THE ONLY NOTIFICATION IT&E CUSTOMERS WILL RECEIVE*.
* You have the right to dispute this notice. You must state your claim in person or in writing no later than **March 22**. You must pay any amount not in dispute to avoid disconnection. Payment denotes acceptance of all charges.
If you have questions regarding billing or service, Please call Customer Service at **682-4ITE (4483)** or Visit any IT&E CS Center nearest you.
IT&E Life in Motion
To avoid disconnection you may pay your IT&E bill at any location below:
SHELL Service Stations – up to 4:00pm
Chalan Laulau/Tinian/Rota Office– up to 4:30pm
TSL Plaza – up to 6:00pm
Online payment – up to 9:00pm

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
HUMAN RESOURCES
Job Vacancy Announcement
Job Vacancy No. 11-024
Opening Date: Friday, 03/18/11
Closing Date: Tuesday, 03/22/11
FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS ANALYST
DUTIES: Under the overall supervision of the division manager or his/her designee, the incumbent's duties and responsibilities are as follows: Responsible for finance related activities and for supervising the daily dispute management operations. Supervises support staff to include: prioritizing and assigning work; conducting performance evaluations; ensuring staff are trained; and, making hiring, termination, and disciplinary recommendations. Researches, collects, analyzes, and reconciles information from disputed accounts. Complies documents to prepare accounts for resolution. Analyzes information to validate billings. Identifies and processes necessary billing adjustments and completes documents to support adjustments. Prepares written responses to customers of approved dispute resolutions. Initiates telephone contact and maintains proper follow up with customers. Tracks and reviews pending service orders for field investigations; meets with division managers to discuss specific situations. Prepares, reviews, and submits a variety of reports, to and from internal departments that will assist in effectively resolving customer disputes in a timely manner. Establishes and maintains positive interactions with internal departments to resolve customer disputes timely. Prepares, reviews, and submits required documents for Administrative Hearings, Represents the corporation in Administrative Hearings for disputed accounts as assigned. Performs other duties of a similar nature or level. SUBJECT TO PRE-EMPLOYMENT DRUG SCREENING.
LOCATION: Chief Financial Officer Division, Saipan.
SALARY: $34,176 to $41,011 per annum; Un-graded, Un-classified.
POSITIONS: Two.
MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: Associates Degree or equivalent "plus" 4 years professional experience in Accounting, Finance, Marketing, Administration, or Customer Service. Knowledge of: Supervisory principles; Administrative procedures; Customer service principles and other applicable laws, rules and regulations; Basic mathematics; Telephone etiquette; Office policies and procedures. Skills in: Monitoring and evaluating staff; Prioritizing and assigning work to staff; Providing customer service; Applying Federal, State, and/or Local laws, rules, and regulations; Performing mathematical calculations; Applying accounting/financial and principles; Recording, analyzing, verifying, reconciling, and reporting of transactions; Operating a 10-key machine; Preparing and analyzing reports; Using computers and related software applications; Communication, interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, etc. sufficient to exchange or convey information and to receive work directions. APPLICANTS MAY BE TESTED.
Applications may be picked up at the Human Resource Office located on the 3rd Floor of the Joeten Dandan Building or the Tinian and Rota Administration Office. Failure to provide required documents listed on the application will be grounds for disqualification.
CUC IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER

259 students denied SHEFA awards

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Saipan Higher Educational Financial Assistance program turned down the applications of 259 students for the spring semester after they were found ineligible and lack supporting documents in their submissions.

SHEFA administrator Henry Hofschneider said yesterday that 131 applications were found ineligible for assistance while 128 failed to submit supporting documents by the Feb. 28 deadline.

The SHEFA board has already approved 437 applications for three programs—grant in aid, field of study, and incentives—for spring semester 2011.

SHEFA has already sent mail to all denied applicants, explaining the reason for their ineligibility.

Hofschneider said that of the 128 applications that lack supporting documents, 28 were new on-island applicants; 49 were from ongoing on-island students; 11 were from new off-island students; and 40 were from ongoing off-island students.

He said students who turned in their supporting documents past the Feb. 28 deadline will be considered for fall semester 2011.

Saipan Tribune learned that SHEFA has yet to finish reviewing all spring semester applications. As of yesterday, Hofschneider said less than 20 applications will be checked.

The SHEFA program received more than 700 applications for spring 2011, he said. Of this number, 437 have been approved; 131 were deemed ineligible; 131 lacked supporting requirements; and about 20 applications that have yet to be checked.

As of yesterday, about 300 fall 2010 semester scholars have yet to get their financial assistance from SHEFA. The Finance Department has released some 302 checks to date, totaling to $494,000.

Hofschneider said that SHEFA also submitted last week a check request for 182 students for the spring 2011 semester, totaling $183,000.

SHEFA, he added, has yet to get word from Finance as to when these checks will be disbursed. He cited the government's cash-flow problem as the main factor for the delay.

Three accept cockfighting board nomination

Saipan Mayor Donald G. Flores said the three individuals he nominated to the Saipan Cockfight Board have already accepted their appointments.

They are Fermin Sakisat, Juan C. Tudela, and John Borja, who previously served as chairman of the board.

According to Flores, two other appointees, including a representative from the United Cockers and Breeders Federation of Saipan, have not formally accepted the positions yet.

"The two haven't called back yet. We hope to complete the board within this week," he told reporters.

The five-member Saipan Cockpit Board came about after Gov. Benigno R. Fitial enacted Saipan Local Law No. 17-5, which amended the Saipan Cockfighting Act of 1994.

Authored by Rep. Ray N. Yumul (Rep-Saipan), the law established a board consisting of five members, from its previous three members, to be appointed by the mayor of Saipan.

The law also allows for issuance of cockpit licenses for a period of five years, commencing on July 1 of the first year and ending on June 30 of the fifth year.

It also raised the minimum bid for the operation of a cockpit from $10,000 to $20,000 per year, to be paid no later than 24 hours following the bid award.

All bids will come with a nonrefundable deposit of $500, which was previously set at $100.

Once all members are on board within the week, Flores said they will look into the newly drafted regulations for cockfighting on Saipan. ***(Clarissa V. David)***

Century Insurance
Insure it right, insure with CIC

CLAIMS OFFICER

Century Insurance is the largest insurer in the Northern Mariana Islands and one of the leading insurers in Guam and in other parts of Micronesia. We are currently in need of a Claims Officer for CIC Saipan with the following requirements:

1. Minimum of four (4) years experience in a non-life insurance company particularly in the Claims Department.
2. Graduate of a four (4) year college degree preferably in business management.
3. Knowledgeable in automotive damage adjusting and/or estimation.
4. Excellent customer service, time management, written and oral communication skills.
5. Must be computer literate and proficient in MS Office and Oracle-based programs.
6. Must be eligible for employment in the U.S.

The successful candidate will be responsible for the evaluation, monitoring and adjustment of claims in accordance with the company's practices and procedures. The Claims Officer is tasked to supervise a technical staff and to manage issues of claimants and with auto shops. He/she must be experienced in the preparation and review of claims reports and statistics for reinsurance.

Interested applicants may submit their application and/or resume at our Human Resources Department Office located at the 2nd floor of the JP Center, Beach Road, Saipan. Applications may also be sent to: customerservice@centuryinsurancegroup.net

Century Insurance is an Equal Opportunity Employer.
Women, minorities and disabled persons are encouraged to apply.

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BID
CUC-IFB-11-027

REHABILITATION OF SEWER LIFT STATION NOS. S-2 & S-8

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the rehabilitation and upgrade of Sewer Lift Stations and installation of Force-Main in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The project consists, in general of the rehabilitation and upgrade of Two (2) Sewer Lift Stations and the installation approximately 1,300 foot of force-main. The work shall be done not to disrupt the daily operation of the sewer discharge. The work is inclusive of rehabilitation of the wet well, replacement of pumps, guide rails, control panel cleanup of the basins, repair, replacement, rehabilitation of pipeline, pipes, replacement of generator, asphalt paving, etc. CUC requires the Project to be completed in **180 calendar days** from date of award of contract.

The Bid Package and Scope-of-Work may be picked-up, upon receipt of a deposit from the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check, in the amount of $ 100.00 (nonrefundable) for one set; at the CUC, Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room 4, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Dandan, Saipan, between 7:30 AM to 11:30 AM and 12:30 PM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by a Site Visit will be held on **March 28, 2011 at 9:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.10, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Seven (7) copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-11-027, **Rehabilitation of Sewer Lift Station Nos. S-2 & S-8"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 4, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on April 14, 2011**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before due date and time. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 30 days after submission.

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

A Bid Guarantee of 15 percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. A Performance Bond of *one hundred (100%) percent* of the total proposal price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. Surety company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands or otherwise secured in a manner satisfactory to CUC. A Payment Bond of *one hundred (100%) percent* of the total proposal price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands or otherwise secured in a manner satisfactory to CUC, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract.

All insurers questions, concerns and qualification should be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code. Please refer to other bidding requirements described in Document 00200 - Instructions to Bidders.

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or request for clarification regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on April 7, 2011** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, Jr., CUC Purchasing Officer, via email - msablan@cucgov.net with a copy to Commander, Robert Lorenz, Water/Wastewater Engineer via email robert_lorenz@cucgov.net and Ms. Janina Mika Muna, Procurement & Supply, Administrative Support Assistant - mika_muna@cucgov.net.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

ABE UTU MALAE
Executive Director

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

AMENDED NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY
of
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT FUNDS
for
PROGRAM YEAR 2011
and
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

This advertisement is paid for by NMHC with CPD Funds.

The Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, through the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) is announcing the availability of $1,591,011.00 in Community Planning and Development (CPD) funds available from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. NMHC anticipates receiving $880,151.00 in Community Development Block Grants (CDBG); $647,474 Home Investment Partnership (HOME); and, $63,386.00 Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) funds for Program Year (PY) 2011.

The CDBG funds, authorized under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, may be used for a wide range of community development activities to revitalize neighborhoods, provide affordable housing, expand economic opportunities, and improve community facilities and services. However, use of these funds must meet at least one of the national objectives which include: 1) to benefit low and moderate-income families; 2) to eliminate slum or blight conditions; or 3) to meet other urgent community development needs.

The CDBG program requires a grant recipient to certify that it will minimize displacement of persons as a result of activities assisted with CDBG funds. The CNMI government does not plan on undertaking any activity which will cause displacement of persons. In the event of any unforeseen displacement resulting from any CDBG funded activity, the CNMI government will comply with the requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, its implementing regulation and applicable local law.

HOME funds may be used to create affordable housing through financing assistance, site acquisition or improvement, and rehabilitating existing residential dwellings as well as providing funds for new construction or purchase of a single-family residential dwelling. Use of HOME funds must benefit low-income families.

ESG funds may be used to rehabilitate or convert buildings into homeless shelters and for shelter operating expenses, supportive services and homeless prevention activities. Use of ESG funds must benefit the homeless.

Information concerning eligibility uses of the grant funds may be obtained upon request at the respective offices of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) located on Garapan, Saipan; San Jose, Village, Tinian; and, Songsong Village, Rota.

In order to plan ahead as to the use(s) of the PY 2011 allocation, the NMHC will be conducting hearings to obtain public input on community development and housing needs, and to provide information to the public on the status of the approved ongoing CDBG projects. The public hearings will be held as follows:

1. On Rota, April 18, 2011, at 6:30 p.m. at the NMHC Office, Songsong Village;
2. On Tinian, April 19, 2011, at 6:30 p.m. at the CDA/NMHC Office in San Jose Village; and,
3. On Saipan, April 20, 2011, at 6:30 p.m. at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan.

Accommodations for disabled individuals or other non-English speaking individuals who wish to attend the public hearing is available upon request by giving at least 24 hours notice prior to the meeting so that such needs can be arranged and provided. Additional inquiries concerning the CDBG program may be directed in writing to the Corporate Director, Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, P.O. 500514, Saipan, MP. 96950, or by calling Zenie P. Mafnas, Grant Writer/Planner at 234-6866 or 234-7689.

/s/ **Joshua T. Sasamoto**
Corporate Director

"NMHC is a fair housing agency and an equal opportunity provider, lender and employer"

RetireSafe backs CPI for Seniors Act

WASHINGTON, D.C.—RetireSafe, representing more than 400,000 senior-citizen supporters nationwide, strongly endorsed the recently introduced CPI for Seniors Act, H.R. 1086. This critical House legislation, introduced by U.S. Reps. John "Jimmy" Duncan, Jr. (TN-2) and Daniel Lipinski (IL-3), along with six of their House colleagues, will end the use of the Consumer Price Index now used to set Social Security Cost of Living Adjustments and directs the Bureau of Labor Statistics to create a "CPI for Seniors" that is accurate, honest, and beyond reproach.

Introduced on March 15, H.R.1086 would mandate a broader, better, fairer CPI that would accurately measure the costs of inflation impacting older Americans everywhere.

RetireSafe president Thair Phillips called the two lead sponsors, Duncan and Lipinski, "true heroes for America's seniors." He noted that "Social Security beneficiaries and Military Retirees have been frozen in place with a zero COLA for two years running. While we all know health care costs have increased, food, energy, and clothing costs have also climbed." Among those costs:

Food: In January, food consumed at home posted its largest cost increase in more than two years.

Cash prices for corn, wheat, and soybeans have climbed 40 percent to 100 percent compared to price levels just one year ago. Beef prices are up more than 25 percent, year over year, and sugar prices are up 55% at year-end 2010 from last August.

Energy: Gasoline prices now average well above $3 dollars a gallon nationwide. In some places, pump prices over $4 dollars a gallon are being seen. On February 14 gasoline prices were up by 20 percent over prices one year ago. Many households depending on fuel oil to heat their homes have seen their heating oil costs increase.

Clothing: Cotton prices have doubled to levels not seen since the Civil War. The prices of other fabrics have jumped by roughly 50 percent as well. Some analysts expect clothing prices to rise by 10 percent in the coming months.

"Thanks to Representatives Duncan, Lipinski, and their outstanding cosponsors, Representatives Gregg Harper (MS-3), Paul Tonko (NY-21), Phil Roe (TN-1), Marcia Fudge (OH-11), Sanford Bishop (GA-2), and Delegate Gregorio 'Kilili' Camacho Sablan (MP-00), this glaring wrong can finally be righted," Phillips said. "I salute all of these fine individuals for their efforts to get the numbers right so that seniors are treated fairly," he added.

"We owe them all a debt of gratitude for working to finally correct this bogus CPI and the flawed COLAs that result from it," he said. "We urge other members to join them in this effort by supporting H.R. 1086." ***(PR)***

Kramer named marketing VP for Pacific Historic Parks

Carlton Kramer, VP of marketing for Pacific Historic Parks.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

PEARL HARBOR, Hawaii—Carlton Kramer has been appointed vice president of marketing for Pacific Historic Parks. As a non-profit cooperating association with the National Park Service, PHP operates bookstores, an online retail store, audio tour programs, and public membership programs at World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument at Pearl Harbor, Kalaupapa National Historical Park on the island of Molokai, American Memorial Park on Saipan and War in the Pacific National Historical Park in Guam. Profits from sales are returned to the National Park Service to enrich interpretive and educational programs to promote Park stewardship and enhance the visitor experience at each of the park sites.

As vice president, Kramer will oversee Pacific Historic Parks' retail sales and marketing efforts and assist in the PHP's re-branding initiative. Formerly known as the Arizona Memorial Museum Association, in June 2010, the organization changed its name to Pacific Historic Parks to better reflect its expanded scope of support at historical sites throughout the Pacific.

"Carlton brings more than 30 years of marketing and sales experience in Hawaii's retail and hospitality industries to Pacific Historic Parks," said Tom Shaw, president and CEO, Pacific Historic Parks. "His expertise will be invaluable as we move forward on our strategic plans to increase support and funding for the parks through sales and fundraising revenue streams."

Most recently, Kramer managed Hilo Hattie's marketing and sales operations as vice president. From 2008 to 2010, he was president of Marketing Specialist of The Pacific, providing marketing support to Hilo Hattie, as well as Ku'uloa Ranch, Interisland Airways and TransAir Hawaii.

In the hospitality industry, Kramer served as vice president of sales and marketing for Mid Pacific Airlines from 1980 to 1986; Hawaiian Pacific Resorts from 1988 to 1994; and Castle Resorts & Hotels from 1994 to 1996 and Hilo Hattie from 1996 to 2008. ***(PR)***

Can you identify

THE NMI Council for the Humanities, in collaboration with the *Saipan Tribune*, is running a series of photographs in this section every Tuesday and is inviting the public to identify the persons or places featured in this section.

If you can identify the persons or places in the picture, please contact the NMI Council for the Humanities by telephone (235-4785), via email (photo@nmihumanities.org) or by visiting the Council's office located in Springs Plaza, Gualo Rai. These images are from the Council's Historic Photograph Database which is currently being developed to help document the history and cultures of the CNMI.

The individuals in last week's photo were identified as, from left, Lorenza Warakai Odoshi and Delfina Warakai Iginoes. Photo identified by: Elvira Odoshi Seman, Vivian Rogopes, Rosa Warakai, Lynn Igisaiar, Erna O. Ngirutongor, and Chong Torres.

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Happy, happy birthday to Jody Abraham! We hope you have the best birthday, the kind that's out of this world! We love you and we wish you all the bestest things ever! God bless you and may you have many more to come! Love, bossing and the cherries!
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Mar. 22, 2000

Governor OKs park improvement

Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio has signed a bill into law that will clear the way for the Commonwealth Development Authority to borrow up to $2 million from the Marianas Public Land Trust which will be used to improve the American Memorial Park. The law allows CDA to tap portion of the funds held by the MPLT for the much needed development and maintenance of the memorial park subject to the approval of Board of Trustees. MPLT, which has the expending authority over funds received from the United States pursuant to the Covenant and Technical Agreement, can lend only interests generated from the original amount.

SGMA tries to get side to 20/20

The Saipan Garment Manufacturers Association submitted a written statement to Rhonda Schwartz, ABC 20/20's producer, after the news group was recently in Saipan, from March 3-6, filming and conducting interviews for an upcoming national news program, expected to be aired around April 19, 1999. SGMA Executive Director Richard A. Pierce said he "wouldn't expect to see anything much different from their suspiciously awarded portrayal of last year's 'A Day in the Life of Saipan,' aired last April in the US. We doubt there will be any shots of factories except their staged productions photographed through fences again or portray our destitute workers." He added, "we asked to submit a written statement, but I seriously doubt they'll air any of it. We'd give them $10,000 to read all five paragraphs, but it wouldn't fit the 'broiler plate' script they came in with."

Mar. 22, 2001

MVA may get more funds for promotion

The House of Representatives has approved proposals to reprogram 100 percent of revenues generated from the aviation fuel tax to fund promotional activities of the Marianas Visitors Authority. The lower chamber's move came in light of criticisms on the apparent absence of effective marketing activities to promote the Northern Marianas as a tourist destination. House Bill 12-359 will give the tourism industry the needed boost through additional funding for MVA's marketing and promotional campaign, according to House Speaker Benigno R. Fitial.

SVES moves to improve students' reading grasp

San Vicente Elementary School Principal Janet Villagomez said 24 personalities including Public School System Commissioner Rita Inos and Rep. Brigida Ichihara made an appearance during the school's Read and Books Week. Dr. Inos and Ms. Ichihara read books to the school's first to sixth grade students. The Reading and Books Week is part of concerted efforts to improve reading capabilities and comprehension of students in the elementary level. Ms. Villagomez said by inviting key personalities to read books along with students, the school hopes to raise the reading level of students in accordance to SVES reform program.

Mar. 22, 2002

Medicaid expenses reaches $10.7M

The CNMI's Medicaid-a government health insurance-has been drowning from indebtedness to the Commonwealth Health Center, as Medicaid expenditures far exceeded the annual budget in recent years. "What we get from the feds-the $2.1 million for Fiscal Year 2002-is not enough to cover the cost of what our recipients have incurred," said Helen Sablan, Medicaid administrator. Records obtained from the Medicaid office showed that expenditures for the FY 2001 reached more than $10.71 million, more than $8 million above the $2.01-million budget for the fiscal year.

Oceans for trapping carbon dioxide?

To slow down the greenhouse effect of carbon dioxide on the earth, an international consortium, composed mostly of agencies of different governments as partners, is proposing an experiment that would involve the injection of the gas into deep ocean waters. The experiment, which involves a process known as "sequestration," would be made about four nautical miles offshore from Nawiliwili, Kauai in Hawaii, if the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency issues an ocean research permit to the consortium. The consortium is composed of the U.S. Department of Energy's National Energy Technology Laboratory, Australia's Division of Marine Research, Canada's Office of Energy Research and Development, Japan's Global Environmental Technology Department, the Research Council of Norway, and ABB Corporate Research of Switzerland.

Learn to understand why children do what they do

The Office of the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities is inviting parents, teachers, teachers aides, and counselors to attend a training titled "Functional behavior: Understanding why children do what they do."

The training will be conducted by Jerry Diaz, M.Ed., early childhood special education teacher, on March 30, 2011, from 5pm to 8pm, at Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan. Dinner will be provided to participants.

Seating is limited so call the council's office at 664-7000/7001/7002 and ask for Lillian Ada or Ray Diaz to register and reserve seating.

This training will also be available to Tinian and Rota participants via video teleconferencing at the VTC rooms of NMC campuses on Tinian and Rota, from 5pm to 8pm. Seating is limited to 20 participants and dinner will be provided.

Interested individuals requesting special accommodations (sign language interpreter, Braille, or alternative formats) are asked to notify the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities at least five days in advance for their special accommodations needs. This will give the organizers ample time to coordinate and provide the accommodation.

For more information and registration, contact CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities Office at 664-7000/7001/7002 or fax at 664-7030 or 511 or 711 telecommunication relay service. ***(PR)***

EMO warns of high surf today

The CNMI Emergency Management Office issued yesterday a high surf and small craft advisory and is strongly advising the public, mariners, and boaters to avoid navigating in these conditions.

Based on the information received from National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam, moderate trade winds will persist through most of the week and a large north swell will bring hazardous surf to north facing reefs until early Tuesday.

The small craft advisory remains in effect until today. Combined seas of 10 to 11 feet were projected last night and should diminish to 9 feet today and 7 feet by tomorrow. Surf should diminish to 6 to 8 feet this morning. Seas of 10 to 11 feet are expected to produce conditions hazardous to small craft.

If traveling by boat is necessary, EMO warns mariners to exercise caution, especially when entering or leaving harbors and inlets and near reef lines. Wear flotation devices. Also avoid venturing near exposed reefs and beaches, especially those along north and east facing reefs as rip currents are hazardous. ***(PR)***

NMC institutional researcher completes professional dev't

Northern Marianas College institutional researcher Lisa Hacskaylo recently completed courses conducted by the Association for Institutional Research's Data & Decisions® Academy. The Data & Decisions® Academy is a series of online courses designed for community college institutional research professionals.

Hacskaylo was awarded a certificate of completion for the courses she took during the Fall 2010, *Foundations of Data Management* and *Foundational Statistics for Decision Support*. The courses were partially funded by the Data & Decisions® Academy Presidential Scholarship Hacskaylo received. Hacskaylo qualified for the competitive scholarship based on her application, letter of interest, and a nomination from NMC interim president Lorraine T. Cabrera.

Hacskaylo

"We are very proud of Lisa's accomplishment," said Cabrera. "Over the years she has been a dedicated team member in NMC's accreditation efforts, as well our efforts to improve and advance the college."

Cabrera added "The knowledge and skills Lisa has gained from this experience will enable her to further assist the college community make data-informed decisions more effectively."

The Data & Decisions® Academy offers courses through the AIR and is committed to building capacity in institutional research and data use at two-year institutions. The Academy aims to provide participants with a unique learning opportunity in which they acquire skills and knowledge to better perform as institutional research functions at their respective institutions. ***(NMC)***

MEMORIAL TRIP
Rick Babauta of Saipan, shown here kneeling in front, second from left, joins other members of the Guam Purple Heart Vietnam Veterans' Group during a recent trip to Hanoi, Vietnam. The group has been visiting Vietnam every year for more than five years.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Biggest losers for the week named

Hard work and dedication usually makes you a winner. Thirty-three individuals from Tinian are competing to lose weight and body fat and win big in health and the Tinian mayor's wellness campaign biggest loser competition, which started Feb. 11, 2011, and ends April 29, 2011. Every two weeks, competitors lose to win prizes. Last week's winners were: Kerry Borja (DPS) in the male category and Laxmi Thappa (housewife) in the female category. Both received cash prizes. A total of 125 lbs and 22.90 percent body fat for the entire group was lost in two weeks' time. Congratulations to all participants! ***(PR)***

No classes at Chacha Ocean View on Friday

The Chacha Ocean View Jr. High School is scheduled to have a statewide professional development on March 25, 2011. There are no classes for all students. Call the school at 237-3921 or 664-4100 if you have any questions or concerns. ***(PR)***

Stakeholders meeting for A&E design of Tinian landfill

The Office of the Governor's Capital Improvement Program Office announced yesterday a public stakeholders meeting for the architectural and engineering design for the Tinian sanitary landfill on Wednesday, March 23, 6pm, at the Tinian Elementary School cafeteria. The purpose of the stakeholder meeting is to discuss the project, gather information, identify concerns, and meet with the general public and customers of the Tinian landfill. For more information, contact Roy Reyes or Nerissa Benavente at the CNMI Office of the Governor, CIP office at 664-2371. ***(PR)***

OES kindergarten registration ongoing

Oleai Elementary School kindergarten student registration for school year 2011-2012 will begin on April 5, 2011 and end on April 30, 2011, from 9am to 4pm daily.

Kindergarten students must be born between Sept. 1, 2005, and Aug. 30, 2006. The following documents are required to be enrolled: birth certificate, school entrance health certificate (updated), current school accident/ health insurance/ medical (updated), map of residence, and legal adoption/ guardian document (court issued).

Oleai Elementary School zone covers the areas bounded by south of Naked Fish Restaurant on Beach Road, Gualo Rai, Chalan Laulau, Chalan Kiya (golf course), bottom of As Terlaje hill north of Island Market (Calvo's) to Falughula and San Jose, Oleai. ***(PR)***

Tinian beaches get green flag

The Division of Environmental Quality analyzed water samples collected from Tinian's recreational beaches and storm water drainage this week as part of the regularly scheduled sampling. None of the samples collected contained excessive concentrations of fecal indicator bacteria nor did they exceed the CNMI Marine Water Quality standards. Therefore, DEQ assigns all of the sampled beach sites a green flag.

The division analyzed a total of 10 samples from Tinian this week. For more information, contact DEQ at 664-8500. ***(DEQ)***

Veterans outreach on Rota, Saipan

This is to let all veterans and all concerned that Tina San Augustine, Department of Veterans Affairs legal administrative specialist from Guam, and Ruth Coleman, executive director of the CNMI Military and Veterans Affairs Office, will be on Rota and Saipan on April 4-7, 2011, for a veterans outreach on federal benefits. They will be also entertaining questions and assisting with claims.

- Rota: April 4-5, at 8:30am-4:30pm at the Rota WIA office
- Saipan: April 6-7, 2011, at 8:30am-4:30pm at the Military and Veterans Affairs Office on Capital Hill, building 1364.

If you wish to make an appointment or for further information, call Coleman or Bernie Dela Cruz at the Military and Veterans Affairs Office at 664-2650. ***(PR)***

GCA enrollment ongoing

Open enrollment for school year 2011-2012 in ongoing at Grace Christian Academy. Continuing students and their siblings are guaranteed a slot until April 1, 2011 if the maximum number of class enrollment is not reached yet.

Classes will be limited to a maximum of 25 students only for Grades 1 to 6, and 30 students for Grades 7 to 12. Open enrollment begins on Monday, April 4, 2011. Enrollment packets are available at the registrar's office. The packet must be turned in along with all other required documents.

Grace Christian Academy is located on Upper Navy Hill. For more information, contact the school at 322-3320/3850 or set up an appointment to visit our school. ***(GCA)***

Carrier Air Wing 5 arrives in Guam

SANTA RITA, Guam—Aircraft assigned to Carrier Air Wing 5 have been arriving at Anderson Air Force Base since Thursday as part of the Navy's force posture adjustment for Operation Tomodachi; U.S. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response operations in support of Japan.

CVW-5 is forward-deployed to Naval Air Facility Atsugi, Japan and is part of the George Washington carrier strike group. Air wing squadrons are flying out of NAF Atsugi to provide ramp space for other aircraft needed to support relief efforts.

"I humbly and respectfully thank the wonderful people of Guam for welcoming us to their island," said Rear Adm. Dan Cloyd, the strike group commander. "Your truly inspiring *hafa adai* spirit is appreciated more than mere words can ever convey."

The air wing's SH-60 Seahawk helicopters and C-2 Greyhound aircraft will remain in Japan supporting the missions; F/A-18 Super Hornet, EA-6B Prowler and E-2C Hawkeye aircraft will temporarily relocate to Guam, where they will be ready to respond to support operations and contingencies throughout the Western Pacific. ***(USN)***

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXI, Issue No. 68

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP 96950

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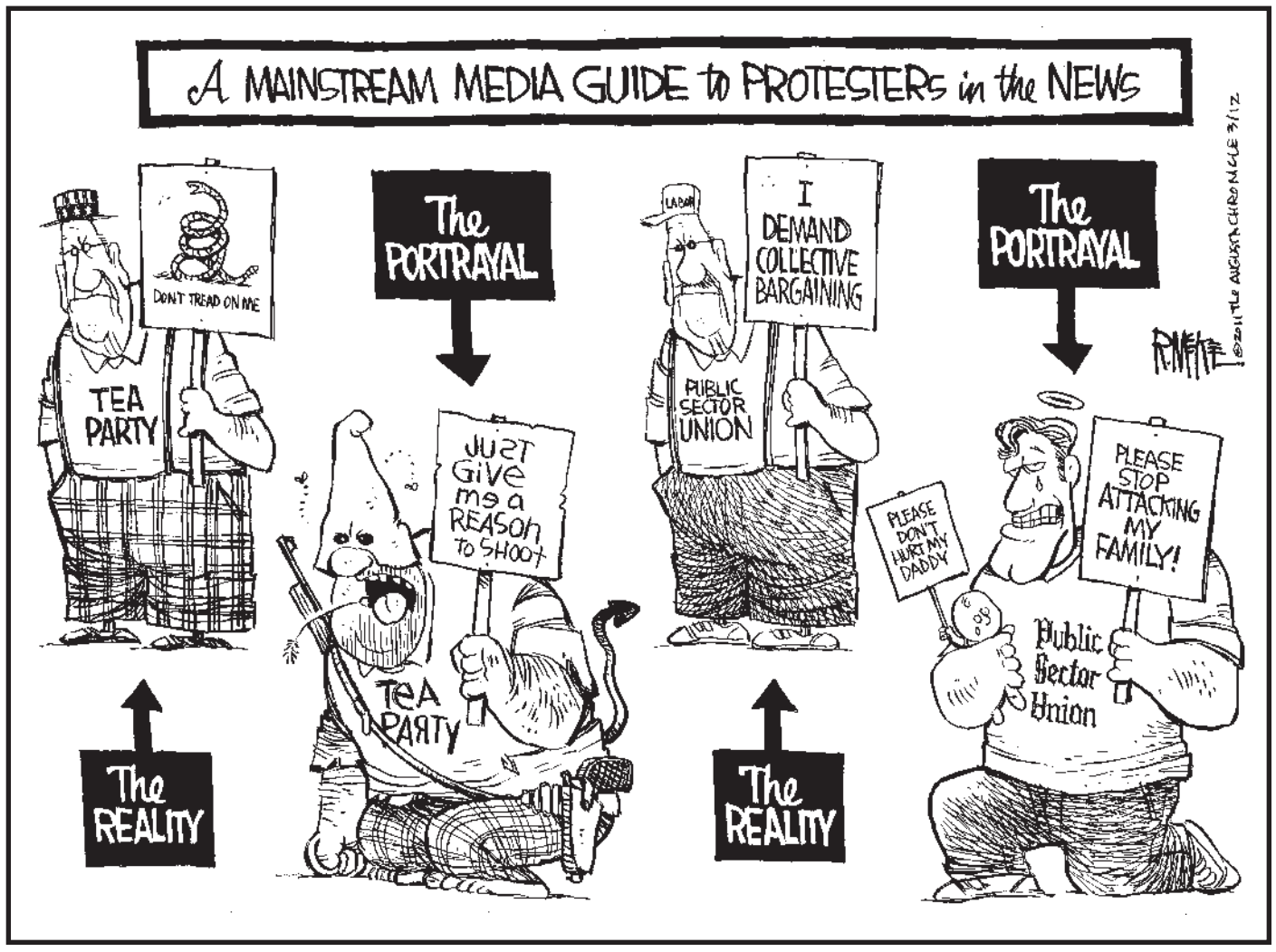


High-speed rail essential to winning America's future

By ALEXANDER J. FIELD
McClatchy-Tribune Information Services

Alexander J. Field is a professor of economics at Santa Clara University. Readers may write him at Santa Clara University, 500 El Camino Real, Santa Clara, Calif. 95053.

SANTA CLARA, Calif.—Would high-speed rail spending add jobs in the United States? Of course.

Even if some of the rolling stock for the trains were imported, structures and other permanent way would still have to be built in the United States. Under current conditions, any government spending—for rails, for bridges, for highways, for the military—would contribute to job creation.

Fears that government spending might displace or crowd out private-sector capital formation would be justified were we at or close to capacity. But we are not.

The unemployment rate remains almost 10 percent, and this doesn't account for those who, discouraged, have simply left the workforce.

Even more telling is the ratio of employment to population, which has fallen from its all-time high of over 64 percent in 1999 to 58 percent today. In spite of large "supply side" tax cuts tilted toward the wealthy, the record of the George W. Bush presidency on job creation was in fact quite poor.

For a variety of reasons, including the recent financial crisis, the U.S. economy remains in a serious slump. High-speed rail spending could stimulate job growth and help jump start the economy.

These projects would, of course, add to the deficit and concerns about its long term growth, particularly that attributable to health care, are merited.

Looking back over the last three decades, however, Republicans' interests in deficit reduction seems to have waxed and waned depending upon who occupied the White House.

The deficit ballooned under Bush, due largely to tax cuts but also to increases in military spending and a new unfunded prescription drug benefit. The resulting run-up in the debt was regrettable, but the time to cut government spending is when the economy is strong, not when it is weak.

If the country is going to incur new debt, it is better to do so to acquire well-chosen infrastructure and equipment than to fund consumption.

Would high-speed rail represent well-chosen infrastructure? In other words, would it help the U.S. "win the future"? This is a more complex question. It requires us to consider not simply whether such projects would help close the output gap, but whether and how effectively they would expand the potential output of the economy.

Here there are legitimate concerns about whether the U.S. has enough high density corridors—such as that between Boston and Washington—to yield large benefits.

And building in dense areas can be costly. For example, the proposed Los Angeles to San Francisco route would go right through my backyard in Palo Alto, and the extent to which that part of the route will or will not be put underground has become a contentious political issue.

That said, state and federal governments have a long and largely successful record of supporting infrastructure development, from the Erie Canal to regional and transcontinental railroads to the Interstate Highway System and, more recently, to the Internet.

The build-out of the surface road network during the Great De-

See HIGH-SPEED on Next Page

Il Papa en Centuria

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Vergara is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune*'s Opinion Section.*

This is not about the Pope. It is about my papa who would have been 100 years old today. Five years ago, he said to himself, "Thank you life. And thank you loved ones. It has been quite a journey. But I have one more thing to do, and I can only do it alone." He did.

I went to his funeral in Hawaii from Saipan but I ended up on the operating table for an inflamed gall bladder surgery. So my papa and I conversed in the numinous world! The rest of the family were in a ritual of grief on one of Oahu's northern memorial parks, while the surgeon punched three holes on my tummy to insert an optical device, and sucking tube and a guiding gizmo. The procedure was over in an hour, as it was at my papa's interment.

My papa went to graduate school when I was 10; returned six years later. He came home with Albert Ellis' book *Sex Without Guilt*. It was another six years before I recognized the import of Ellis' book on psychology, but at the time, I suspected my papa brought it home because my mama, being born and bred a Catholic, might have had a religious bias against sex.

Let me digress with a friend's story. He relates that his is wife is a good Catholic who grimaces like she is at the receiving end of a whip while working toward an orgasm; it worries my friend enough that he asks while in the connubial act if he needs to stop since she looks like she is in extreme pain. "No," she protests, "it is just that I was raised to think that sex is dirty, and it distresses me that I am having so much fun."

Ellis' book, which I did not fully understand at the time, gave me a neutral view of sex. Curiosity evolved from puberty into scientific details while Mother Nature took her course in her own good time. Growing up with an affirming Methodist perspective on conjugal matters (rather than the typical Pinoy condemnation of it), the emotive drive found knowledge in biology, particularly the procreative process.

Birds and the bees, tadpoles swimming to the lotus flower, were poetic, but the sperm and ovum caught our attention. We derived our first lesson in humanness from the minute of conception when one of the squirming sperm fertilizes the ovum. There are 200 million sperms per ejaculation swimming to reach a seemingly whimsical orb whose reasons for allowing entry could be anybody's guess.

But one out of 200 million is chosen, making one a winner of life's first lottery at incredible odds. One hundred 99 million, 999 thousand, 999 don't make it. One does. You. Me. Everyone else. There are two million choices, and the ovum chooses one. That is a remarkable act of freedom over a large field of choices. Every human life that comes into being, at the hour of its conception, is immaculately conceived as an amazing winner and incredibly free to choose.

That begins the journey into awe and the wonder of life. In nine months, the sperm and ovum together, jointly, cooperatively and collaboratively, create a complex biological organism, equipped with a muscular and skeletal framework, a respiratory and digestive system, and a central neural system (that in comparison reduces the most advanced computer system in the world to a simple calculator).

I work in human development of the economic, political and cultural dynamics of the social process, and the most needed piece of wisdom to communicate to anyone is the fact that on the nine months of one's conception until birth, one is already a winner, born free, and a bundle of creativity that defies conscious imagination.

We counter the prevailing notion that we have to be somebody, to prove ourselves from a starting point of inadequacy (original deficiency), whether it is in the field of psychology where we are to attain our potential, or in the field of economics where we are to obtain as much benefit as we can over the scarcity of resources that cannot meet the needs of everyone, or in politics where the survival of fittest decrees one's position in the line. The parental anxiety level begins at where children are to go to preschool! Harvard and Princeton can only accommodate a few; NMC students suffer from low self-esteem!

"Who are you?" the boy/girl is asked. "I am the greatest," s/he lifts her/his arms. "Where do you live?" "I live in the Universe," s/he answers. "Where are you going?" "To bend history," s/he replies.

This is a ritual first rehearsed at an inner city preschool on the Westside of Chicago in the late '60s, later replicated and continues to be heard in villages around the world. Pedagogues impart to the children, their own included, the image that they are winners, they are creative just by showing up in life, and they are free to shape their destiny, if they so decide.

My papa's name is Jaime, a Basque equivalent to James; Vergara is a Basque town on the Pyrenees foothills. He named me his junior. I worked with a French colleague in Peru once, spent an August night in Montmartre, Paris. My eldest daughter polished her French in Avignon for a year. Spelled "j'aime," my papa's name means, "I love" in French. My SVES students called me "Mr. Vee." I now go by j'aime la vie. I owe that to my papa. He lived life by his name, without guilt. So do I. That's our story and I am sticking to it.

But that is not really what is important. More critical is, what's your story?

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Visa lottery scams: Another cautionary tale

IMMIGRATION FORUM

By MAYA KARA and BRUCE MAILMAN
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Maya Kara is a native of Hungary and comes to the practice of law by way of her interest in Asian history. Bruce Mailman is a native of Bakersfield, California and was a private investigator in California prior to becoming a lawyer. Both have lived and practiced law in the CNMI for over 20 years, Maya in government service and Bruce in private practice. They are married and are partners in the law firm of Mailman & Kara, LLC in Garapan, Saipan.

We have written repeatedly about pervasive, pernicious false rumors and outright frauds in the immigration context. People seeking admission to the United States are an especially vulnerable group. Like women seeking enhanced beauty and men seeking greater potency, they are seeking something that is difficult and often impossible to attain. They are susceptible to the unscrupulous who would divest them of their money with false promises that they are eager to believe. The old adage remains useful: if something sounds too good to be true, it's probably false. The latest immigration scam that has come to our attention is visa lottery fraud.

How visa lottery fraud works

A long time client, for whom we had gotten a green card and who is petitioning her alien husband for the same, called us recently. She was so excited. "I have great news," she said. "My husband applied for visa lottery and we just got an email that he won. As soon as he sends them money, he will get a green card and he can sponsor his entire family. I just wanted to give you the good news." I told her I was happy for her but to not send any money until I checked it out because I suspected it might be a scam. I also asked her for the email address of the notification.

It turns out that this is a very popular fraud. A company, pretending to be a U.S. government entity, contacts you by email and tells you that you have a great opportunity to sign up for a visa lottery. There is no charge to sign up. Sometime later, they contact you by email to inform you of your good fortune: You have won! Now all you need to do is send a certain amount of money and your green card will be processed. Send more money, and your entire family gets a visa. Break out the champagne!

Or not. This is a fraud, pure and simple. The only purpose of this "notification" is to get as much money out of you as possible before you finally wake up to the sad fact that you have been had. There is very little you can do to make this right or to get your money back. Internet scams are very difficult for the U.S. government to prosecute; these companies set up in various countries and the scammers are very hard to find. The whole field of criminal prosecutions for Internet offenses is unsettled.

How you can identify visa fraud

The first thing you need to look for is the email address. *Official U.S. government websites always have email addresses that end in the domain suffix ".gov."* Some useful U.S. government websites include:

- U.S. Embassy and Consulates: http://www.usembassy.gov/
- Department of State, Travel: http://www.travel.state.gov/
- Diversity Visa Lottery: http://www.dvlottery.state.gov
- Department of Homeland Security: http://www.dhs.gov
- Citizenship & Immigration Services: http://www.uscis.gov
- Customs and Border Protection: http://www.cbp.gov
- Immigration & Customs Enforcement: http://www.ice.gov
- Department of Labor: http://www.doleta.gov

You need to be suspicious of any email communication you receive from a purported U.S. government agency that does not end in the suffix ".gov" especially if it involves assistance with visas to enter or obtain status in the United States. Many of these websites look very genuine and official and will feature one of the following: the American flag, the Statue of Liberty, the White House; U.S. Capitol. Be suspicious of anything that promises something of great value for free or for little money. If it claims to be from a government agency and the email address ends in ".com," ".net" or ".org" or anything except ".gov," you have most likely been targeted for a rip-off.

The U.S. Department of State maintains an excellent webpage titled "International Financial Scams" on the International Travel" tab at http://www.travel.state.gov/. This webpage has excellent up-to-date information on international financial frauds involving Internet dating, false inheritances, work permits, overpayment, and money laundering ("Nigerian scam").

How the real U.S. Diversity Visa Program came about

The Diversity Visa Program is a government-operated lottery set up by statute to allocate 50,000 immigrant visas per year outside of the ordinary numerical limits for visas under the Immigration & Nationality Act. Historically, the majority of immigrants to the U.S. were from European countries. Until 1965, immigrant visas were granted to citizens of various countries in proportion to the national origins of the U.S. population in 1920. This policy continued to favor European immigration and maintained the prevailing European dominant ethnic mix of the U.S. population. The Immigration Act of 1965 revolutionized this process by making available up to 20,000 visas for every independent foreign state and demolishing the ethnic status quo. The door to to greatly increased immigration from countries in Asia, Africa, Central and South America was opened. Not surprisingly, there was a political backlash seeking to limit non-European immigration, led by those ethnic groups in America who lost the greatest share of the immigration pie under the new scheme.

As a compromise, Congress created the diversity lottery program, outside of the established yearly visa limits, to benefit immigrants from those countries that were most adversely affected by the new worldwide access to U.S. visas. The numbers and percentages available to each country change yearly, subject to a complex formula and determined by the attorney general. In addition, applicants must meet strict eligibility criteria, and the time and manner of application is rigorously controlled. Applying for the diversity lottery is not equivalent to purchasing a lottery ticket. Although the choosing of the winners is random, the pool of applicants is severely limited.

How to apply for the Diversity Lottery Program

1. Eligibility criteria

- You must be a citizen of a country that the attorney general has determined is from a "low admission region." In the most recent lottery, citizens of the following countries were deemed *not eligible*: Brazil, Canada, China (mainland-born), Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Jamaica, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, South Korea, United Kingdom (except Northern Ireland) and its dependent territories, and Vietnam. Detailed list of countries whose citizens are eligible are listed at http://travel.state.gov/pdf/1318-DV2012Instructions-ENGL.pdf.
- You possess a high school diploma;
- You must have at least two years of work experience within the past five years in an occupation requiring at least two years of training or experience.

2. Application process

- You must apply on-line according to instructions found at http://travel.state.gov/pdf/1318-DV2012Instructions-ENGL.pdf.
- You must use the DV entry form available for download at http://www.dvlottery.state.gov.
- You must apply by a specific date that will be stated on the website. Applications for 2012 closed on Nov. 3, 2010.
- You will be able to track the status of your entry electronically. This will be the sole means of checking the status of your application.
- When your status indicates that you have been selected, you will receive instructions on how to proceed. You will not receive email or mail notification of your selection.

What does this all mean for foreign residents of the CNMI?

First of all, it means that Diversity Visa Lottery is an unlikely path to U.S. immigration status for many foreign residents of the CNMI. Some of largest foreign groups, from the Philippines and from mainland China, are specifically excluded. Citizens of Bangladesh, Taiwan, Thailand, Hong Kong SAR and Macau SAR are included. For those to whom the lottery is available, you must be very careful and make sure you follow the instructions on the government website. If you think you have been a target or a victim of a Diversity Visa Lottery scam you need to report it to one or more of the following: econsumer.gov website, hosted by the Federal Trade Commission, in cooperation with consumer-protection agencies from 17 nations (http://www.econsumer.gov/english/). You may also report fraud to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Internet Crime Complaint Center. To file a complaint about unsolicited email, visit the Department of Justice Contact Us page.

The information contained in this column is intended as general information only, and not as individual legal advice. Readers should obtain professional legal advice before taking action with respect to their individual situations. Readers may submit questions regarding federalization or immigration issues to the authors by email to lexmarianas@pticom.com. Readers may also e-mail written questions through the Saipan Tribune *at editor@saipantribune.com.*

HIGH-SPEED

From Page 10

pression generated large private-sector benefits, contributing to very fast productivity growth in transportation —railroads and trucking—as well as in wholesale and retail distribution.

High-speed rail projects could certainly create jobs and stimulate the economy in the short run. Whether they would generate benefits similar to those of other government funded infrastructure projects is uncertain. History suggests, however, that there's a good chance they would.

Letters to the Editor

CUC conspiracy?

CUC is hiking power rates again. The public hearing will be held on April 11, 2011, which is a Monday when we are at work and can't be there to voice our concerns. We can't take anymore time away from work because of payless holidays and austerity Fridays. Why is CUC making it difficult for the paying public to attend this meeting?

CUC is exempted from austerity Fridays and payless holidays. Maybe they could hold this public hearing on our austerity Friday so we have time to go while they are paid to be there to work.

The venue for this public hearing is at the Chamber of Commerce conference room where it could hold about 35 people, give or take. That's at least how many people CUC wants to see at this hearing.

Maybe CUC does not care to have the paying public attend or wants the paying public to remain standing outside the building and be uncomfortable enough in the heat to give up, go home and turn on their ACs.

This just sounds like another "rate hike without your consent" hearing or another "no one cares to come anyways and we will get away with charging you more money" hearing. How about it, paying public? Is this something we need to do something about? Or are we going to continue to put up with this hostage situation? Please come and please bring your outrageous "estimates" for power and water bills so we can get our questions answered face to face.

Lucy Sablan
Chalan Kiya, Saipan

Food for thought

Reading the *Saipan Tribune* the last few days has left me with a question that no one seems to have given much thought to. We are down in the tourist industry to a point that seems to be close to a panic situation. Latest worry is over the potential loss of the Japanese due to the earthquake and tsunami.

Here is a little food for thought that hopefully will find a few open ears here on Saipan. Thousands of our best customers from Japan are without heat, electricity, food, and transportation. I would bet that many thousands still have their homes intact, but lack the essentials of everyday life while waiting for the infrastructure to be repaired. Many of these good people have the means to leave for an extended time while waiting for things to be restored.

What if we extend ourselves to these people in a manner that would bring much needed funds into the CNMI and give these people an option of not having to stay in freezing and shortage conditions?

Offer to all that would like to come here for an extended period (30-60 days), hotel discounts, dining discounts, rental car discounts, and attraction discounts—20 to 30 percent depending on the item. I would bet that the hotels would rather have 100 percent of their rooms filled at a discount than 50 to 60 percent at full fare. As would most of the other business owners here.

I am not sure if it would be possible for the airlines to take part, but everyone else would enjoy a larger number of visitors even at a slightly lower reduced rate and make more money.

Give it a little thought, and those folks at the CNMI visitors association could start the ball rolling with a few well-made commercials on Japanese TV.

Andy Nehring
via email

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°

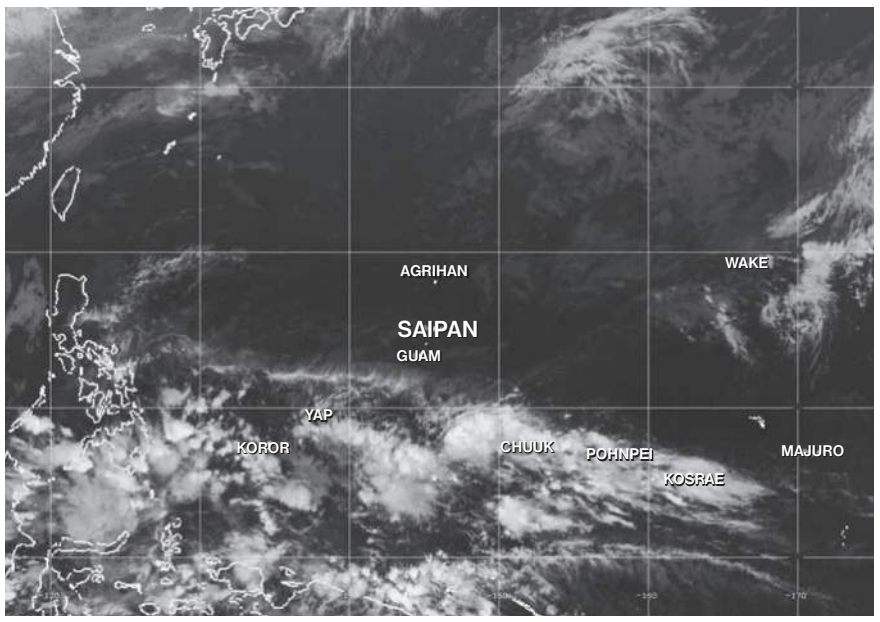
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thundershowers	▲86	▼79
Palau	Rain	▲86	▼77
Yap	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼76
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲82	▼77
Pohnpei	Showers	▲88	▼76
Kosrae	Rain	▲89	▼77
Majuro	Showers	▲86	▼77

Around The Globe

Auckland	Partly Cloudy	▲69	▼63
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	▲55	▼31
Hong Kong	Mostly Cloudy	▲64	▼58
Honolulu	Mostly Cloudy	▲82	▼72
London	Mostly Sunny	▲60	▼40
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲60	▼46
Manila	Thundershowers	▲87	▼76
Melbourne	Showers	▲68	▼55
Miami	Mostly Sunny	▲81	▼62
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲54	▼35
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	▲48	▼37
Paris	Sunny	▲59	▼37
Pusan	Partly Cloudy	▲50	▼33
Rome	Mostly Sunny	▲62	▼42
Salem	Partly Cloudy	▲52	▼36
San Francisco	Showers	▲56	▼50
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	▲46	▼28
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	▲49	▼38
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	▲60	▼44

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, MONDAY, MARCH 21, 2011
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A shear line drops southwestward from 25N179E passing just south of Wake Island at 17N167E to end near 13N157E. Patchy low clouds and showers extend up to 200 miles north of the shear line. Converging trade-winds are producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms west of Koror between 3N and 9N from 130E to 134E southeast of Yap and across Chuuk and Pohnpei states between the equator and 9N from 136E to 161E and near Kosrae between 6N and 8N from 160E to 166E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

3:24 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.6 Feet
8:59 AM	Today	High Tide:	2.1 Feet
3:51 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet
10:16 PM	Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:20 AM	6:28 PM
Wednesday	6:20 AM	6:28 PM
Thursday	6:19 AM	6:28 PM
Friday	6:18 AM	6:28 PM
Saturday	6:17 AM	6:29 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	9:04 PM	7:54 AM
Wednesday	10:07 PM	8:47 AM
Thursday	11:08 PM	9:42 AM
Friday		10:39 AM
Saturday	12:06 AM	11:36 AM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 16, 2010

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM

C09317	4:25am	5:15am	Daily
C09313	7:55am	8:45am	3, 6
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C09601	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09603	3:05pm	3:55pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C09605	6:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
C09599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL287	6:10am	8:45am	Daily
DL285	6:40am	9:15am	1, 3, ,4, 5, 6
DL297	4:35pm	7:15pm	Daily

SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)

OZ119	4:00am	6:40am	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ604	3:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7
OZ119	4:00am	11:25am	Daily via KIX

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

CA988	3:15am	6:55am	1, 5 Dec 13, 17, 20, 24 & 27 only

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ606/701	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
C09317/891	4:25am	9:45am	3, 6 via GUM
DL285/173	6:40am	10:15pm	1, 3, 4, 5, 6 via NRT
C09313/933	7:55am	9:25pm	3 via GUM
C09313/893	7:55am	11:00pm	3 via GUM-Palau
C09603/933	3:05pm	9:25pm	5 via GUM
C09603/893	3:05pm	11:00pm	5 via GUM-Palau
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7 ICN
OZ604/715	3:20pm	11:30pm	7
C09605/933	6:20pm	9:40pm	1, 2, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
C09599/PR111	9:30pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG

OZ606/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
C09603/909	3:05pm	10:25pm	1, 5 via GUM
OZ604/723	3:20pm	10:35pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ604/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN

ARRIVALS

GUAM-SAIPAN

C09316	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
C09596	6:35am	7:25am	3, 6
C09596	7:00am	7:50am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C09600	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C09602	1:40pm	2:30pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
C09606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:25am	3:05pm	Daily
DL286	7:45pm	12:20am+1	2, 3, ,4 ,5, 7
DL288	8:00pm	12:30am+1	Daily

OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN

OZ120	9:50am	2:20am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:10pm	2:20am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7
OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via KIX
OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

CA987	6:40pm	1:55am+1	4, 7 Dec 12, 16, 19, 23 & 26 only

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ704/603	12:10am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ716/603	12:30am	2:20pm	4, 6 via ICN
DL172/286	8:05am	12:20am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 7
C0890/9606	10:55am	8:50pm	3, 6 via GUM
OZ702/605	1:10pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/605	1:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/C09596	10:15pm	7:25am+1	6 via GUM
PR110/C09596	10:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 2, 4, 7 via GUM
C0892/9596	10:25pm	7:25am+1	3 via GUM-Palau
C0892/9596	10:25pm	7:50am+1	5 via GUM-Palau
C0934/9596	11:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 2, 7 via GUM
C0934/9596	11:25pm	7:50am+1	4 via GUM
C0934/9596	11:59pm	7:25am+1	3 via GUM
C0934/9596	11:59pm	7:50am+1	5 via GUM

HONG KONG-SAIPAN

OZ724/603	12:30am	2:20pm	2 ,4 ,6, 7 via ICN
OZ750/603	1:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ722/605	1:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/605	1:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
C0910/9596	11:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 5 via GUM

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; CA: Air China
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Saturday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $160. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam–Rota			
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily
Rota–Saipan			
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily
Guam–Rota			
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily
Rota–Saipan	17:50	18:20	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily
Rota–Guam	10:20	10:45	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily
Rota–Guam			
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily
Saipan–Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40	11:50	Daily
FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Tinian–Saipan			
FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily

Business

World Bank: Japan reconstruction may take 5 years

SINGAPORE (AP)—Japan may need five years to rebuild from the catastrophic earthquake and tsunami that has caused up to $235 billion of damage, the World Bank said Monday.

The March 11 disaster—which killed more than 18,000 people and ravaged northeastern Japan—will likely shave up to 0.5 percentage point from the country's economic growth this year, the bank said in a report. The impact will be concentrated in the first half of the year, it said.

"Damage to housing and infrastructure has been unprecedented," the World Bank said. "Growth should pick up though in subsequent quarters as reconstruction efforts, which could last five years, accelerate."

The bank cited damage estimates between $123 billion and $235 billion, and cost to private insurers of between $14 billion and $33 billion. It said the government will spend $12 billion on reconstruction in the current national budget and "much more" in the next one.

It said a crippled nuclear power station in the northeast that authorities are racing to regain control of is an unfolding situation that poses uncertainties and challenges. Traces of radiation first detected in spinach and milk from farms near the nuclear plant are turning up farther away in tap water, rain and even dust. In all cases, the government said the radiation levels were too small to pose an immediate risk to health.

A short-term drop in Japan's consumer demand and manufacturing production will also hurt trade with regional neighbors, the bank said. South Korean electronics companies have seen the price of some memory chips from Japan rise 20 percent because of disrupted production, while Thai car exporters may run out of Japanese auto parts next month, it said.

"Disruption to production networks, especially in automotive and electronics industries, could continue to pose problems," the bank said. "Japan is a major producer of parts, components and capital goods which supply East Asia's production chains."

Japan's northeast, the epicenter of the disaster, is home to ports, steel mills, oil refineries, nuclear power plants and manufacturers of auto and electronics components. Many of those facilities have been damaged, while nationwide power shortages have severely crimped auto and electronics production.

The World Bank said in a separate report Monday that economic growth in developing East Asian countries will likely slow this year as central banks raise interest rates to battle inflation pressure from rising food and energy prices.

The bank expects developing East Asia, led by China, to expand 8.2 percent this year and 7.9 percent next year from 9.6 percent in 2010. China's economy, the world's second biggest, will likely grow 9 percent in 2011 from 10.3 percent in 2010, the bank said. It said the forecasts were calculated before the 9.0-magnitude earthquake and tsunami.

The bank said central bankers in the region have been slow to attack the threat of quickening inflation from higher commodity prices, and urged policymakers to ease emergency government spending programs implemented during 2009's global economic recession.

"Tighter monetary policies, including higher policy rates, are needed across the region in varying degrees to pre-empt the recent rise in food and other prices from exacerbating inflation expectations," the bank said. "At the same time, governments need to allow their discretionary fiscal stimulus packages to lapse."

About 51 million people were lifted out of poverty—those living on less than $2 per day—in developing East Asia last year, lowering the region's poverty rate to 27 percent, or about 500 million people, the bank said.

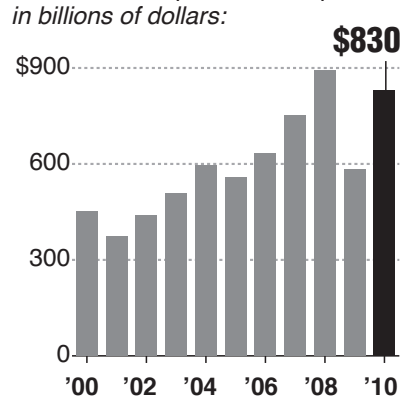
Developing East Asia includes China, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, Fiji, Laos, Mongolia and Papua New Guinea.

AP

A fishing boat remains stuck to a damaged building at Kadonohama fishing port in Ofunato, Iwate Prefecture, Japan, Sunday, March 20, 2011, after the March 11 earthquake and tsunami devastated the area.

Big exporter

Japan is the fourth-biggest exporter in the world. Japan's total exports, in billions of dollars:



Source: CIA World Factbook, Bloomberg
Graphic: Los Angeles Times © 2011 MCT

Radiation discovery fans food fears in Japan

TOKYO (AP)—At a bustling Tokyo supermarket Sunday, wary shoppers avoided one particular bin of spinach.

The produce came from Ibaraki prefecture in the northeast, where radiation was found in spinach grown up to 75 miles (120 kilometers) from the crippled Fukushima nuclear plant. Another bin of spinach—labeled as being from Chiba prefecture, west of Tokyo—was sold out.

"It's a little hard to say this, but I won't buy vegetables from Fukushima and that area," said shopper Yukihiro Sato, 75.

From corner stores to Tokyo's vast Tsukiji fish market, Japanese shoppers picked groceries with care Sunday after the discovery of contamination in spinach and milk fanned fears about the safety of this crowded country's food supply. Trace amounts of radioactive iodine also were found in tap water in Tokyo and elsewhere in Japan.

The anxiety added to the spreading impact of the unfolding nuclear crisis triggered when the March 11 tsunami battered the Fukushima complex, wrecking its cooling system and leading to the release of radioactive material.

On Sunday, the government banned shipments of milk from one area and spinach from another and said it found contamination on two more vegetables—canola and chrysanthemum greens—and in three more prefectures. The Health Ministry also advised a village in Fukushima prefecture not to drink tap water because of radioactive iodine in its supply. It stressed, however, that the amounts remained minuscule and posed no health threat.

There were no signs Sunday of the panic buying that stripped Tokyo supermarkets of food last week. Instead, shoppers scrutinized the source of items and tried to avoid what they worried might be tainted.

Mayumi Mizutani was shopping for bottled water, saying she was worried about the health of her visiting 2-year-old grandchild after a tiny amount of radioactive iodine was found in Tokyo's tap water. She expressed fears that the toddler could possibly get cancer.

"That's why I'm going to use this water as much as possible," she said.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Asian markets rise as Japan nuclear crisis eases

BANGKOK (AP)—Asian markets were mostly higher Monday, buoyed by news over the weekend that Japan was making progress in its battle to control radiation leaks at a nuclear complex that was severely damaged in the March 11 earthquake. Oil prices, meanwhile, jumped to near $103 a barrel in Asia after Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi vowed a "long war" amid allied military strikes over the weekend in the OPEC nation. South Korea's Kospi index was up 0.8 percent to 1,997.30 and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index rose 1.2 percent to 22,574.01. Australia's S&P ASX 200 was up 0.1 percent to 4,631.10. Japan's Nikkei index was closed for a public holiday after a week of dizzying drops and modest rebounds.

Boeing completes 1st flight of new passenger jet

EVERETT, Wash. (AP)—The Boeing Co.'s newest and largest passenger plane completed its first flight on Sunday, marking another milestone as the company prepares to get the long-haul jumbo jet ready for the market by the end of the year. The 4 1/2 hour-flight, which began in Everett and landed in Seattle, was the first in a months-long test program that will log more than 600 flight hours between now and the fall. Two pilots flew the 747-8 Intercontinental from Paine Field across Washington state, rousing cheers from several thousand Boeing workers who watched. Chief test pilot Capt. Mark Feuerstein said the flight was clean and that the airplane was "ready to go fly right now."

States push harder for online sales tax collection

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Tax-free shopping is under threat for many online shoppers as states facing widening budget gaps increasingly pressure Amazon.com Inc. and other Internet retailers to start collecting sales taxes from their residents. Billions of dollars are at stake as a growing number of states look for ways to generate more revenue without violating a 1992 U.S. Supreme Court ruling that prohibits a state from forcing businesses to collect sales taxes unless the business has a physical presence, such as a store, in that state. States are trying to get around that restriction by passing laws that broaden the definition of a physical presence. Retailers are resisting being deputized as tax collectors.

AT&T to buy T-Mobile USA for $39 billion

NEW YORK (AP)—AT&T Inc. said Sunday it will buy T-Mobile USA from Deutsche Telekom AG in a cash-and-stock deal valued at $39 billion that would make it the largest cellphone company in the U.S.

The deal would reduce the number of wireless carriers with national coverage from four to three, and is sure to face close regulatory scrutiny. It also removes a potential partner for Sprint Nextel Corp., the struggling No. 3 carrier, which had been in talks to combine with T-Mobile USA, according to Wall Street Journal reports.

AT&T is now the country's second-largest wireless carrier and T-Mobile USA is the fourth largest. The acquisition would give AT&T 129 million subscribers, vaulting it past Verizon Wireless' 102 million. The combined company would serve about 43 percent of U.S. cellphones.

For T-Mobile USA's 33.7 million subscribers, the news doesn't immediately change anything. Because of the long regulatory process, AT&T expects the acquisition to take a year to close. But when and if it closes, T-Mobile USA customers would get access to AT&T's phone line-up, including the iPhone.

The effect of reduced competition in the cellphone industry is harder to fathom. Public interest group Public Knowledge said that eliminating one of the four national phone carriers would be "unthinkable."

"We know the results of arrangements like this—higher prices, fewer choices, less innovation," said Public Knowledge president Gigi Sohn, in a statement.

T-Mobile has relatively cheap service plans compared with AT&T, particularly when comparing the kind that don't come with a two-year contract. AT&T CEO Randall Stephenson said one of the goals of the acquisition would be to move T-Mobile customers to smart phones, which have higher monthly fees. AT&T "will look hard" at keeping T-Mobile's no-contract plans, he said.

AT&T's general counsel, Wayne Watts, said the cellphone business is "an incredibly competitive market," with five or more carriers in most major cities.

Nation

Spring storm dumps snow in mountains, rain in LA

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A storm bearing rain for the Los Angeles area and heavy snow for the mountains marked the first day of spring with a bang Sunday, illuminating the sky along the California coast with frequent lightning and forcing the evacuations of 12 homes under threat of mud slides.

Rain caused rock slides in Malibu and closed parts of the Pacific Coast Highway, while mud and debris threatened a retaining wall and forced the evacuation of 30 people in Woodland Hills, Los Angeles Fire Department spokeswoman Diana Igawa said.

The National Weather Service said Los Angeles' San Fernando Valley received at least 3 inches of rain—its average rainfall for the month of March—which led to closure of several streets. More than 1.5 inches pelted coastal cities and more than 2 inches fell on Hollywood, the service said.

Strong wind downed trees that damaged homes and broke windows in the valley, downtown Los Angeles and throughout the region.

The mountains were expected to get as much as 3 feet of snow at the higher elevations, making this an unusually strong storm for this time of year, said Stuart Seto of the weather service.

"Usually later in the year they kind of taper off," he said. "Old Man Winter, I guess, wanted to take one more bite out of us before leaving."

AP

A man gets ready to jump off the hood of his car, stalled on flooded Vineland Ave between Vanowen and Sherman Way, in the North Hollywood area of Los Angeles' San Fernando Valley Sunday, March 20, 2011.

Thousands of runners in the Los Angeles Marathon faced pouring rain and lightning strikes, one of which illuminated the downtown skyline just as the race started. It didn't seem to bother them, as Markos Geneti finished first among men with a record time of 2 hours, 6 minutes, 35 seconds.

"When it first started raining, it was freezing cold and I got a little sick," Amy Hastings, who finished second among the women, told KTLA-TV. As the weather warmed, she said, the rainfall made for a pleasant experience.

Los Angeles County Fire Department paramedics had treated about 100 runners—most for hypothermia—by mid-afternoon, Igawa said. Sixty people were taken to hospitals, including one who suffered a broken arm. At the finish line in Santa Monica, paramedics wrapped hundreds of runners in blankets and brought them to a warming room at a hotel, said Santa Monica fire Capt. Judah Mitchell.

In Ventura County and Santa Barbara County, torrential rain brought flash-flood warnings. Rain on a flooded street in Oxnard stranded several cars and swept away another, the weather service said. No injuries were reported.

More than 10 inches of rain fell in the Lake Cachuma area, forcing the release of water from Bradbury Dam, Santa Barbara County spokesman David Flamm said. The release was helping the lake level off, but heavy flow in the Santa Ynez River had officials warning Lompoc Valley residents that they might need to evacuate, he said.

The U.S. Coast Guard and Santa Barbara Harbor Patrol rescued a family of four—including a 6-month-old baby and a dog—whose sailboat broke loose from its moorings amid high surf and strong wind. No one was injured.

Flood warnings also were issued for Los Angeles-area hillside communities burned by wildfires in recent years. But in the foothill community of La Canada Flintridge, where more than 40 homes were destroyed by a mudslide last year, resident Lien Yang said the streets were clear of mud and debris.

About 2 inches of rain had fallen by noon, said Yang, who measures rainfall totals in his backyard. At least 2 more inches were expected to fall before the storm moves out on Monday.

Yang said the surrounding hillsides, burned by a devastating wildfire in 2009, showed substantial signs of regrowth, which helped hold back the mud.

2 Bush officials in running to be next head of FBI

WASHINGTON (AP)—Two officials who worked for President George W. Bush, including one who threatened to resign to block legally questionable anti-terror surveillance, have a realistic chance of being asked to head the FBI, according to people familiar with the search.

James Comey and Kenneth Wainstein served in sensitive national security-related posts at the Justice Department in the Bush administration. That could make for interesting confirmation hearings before the Senate Judiciary Committee if President Barack Obama selects either to succeed FBI Director Robert Mueller. His 10-year, nonrenewable term expires Sept. 4.

Their service as political appointees under a Republican president is a key factor in explaining the rise of Comey and Wainstein in the search. The Obama administration faces an expanded Republican minority in the Senate with the votes to seriously complicate the confirmation prospects of any nominee who draws their united opposition.

On the other hand, Comey became a hero to Democratic opponents of Bush's warrantless wiretapping when Comey refused for a time to reauthorize it. Bush revised the surveillance program when confronted with the threat of resignation by Comey and Mueller.

Comey also was deputy attorney general in 2005 when he unsuccessfully tried to limit tough interrogation tactics against suspected terrorists. He told Attorney General Alberto Gonzales that some of the practices were wrong and would damage the department's reputation.

Some Democrats denounced those methods as torture, particularly the use of waterboarding which produces the same sensation as drowning.

Wainstein was working for Mueller at the FBI when bureau agents at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, objected to abusive interrogation techniques employed by the military and when Mueller decided FBI agents could not participate in interviews involving these techniques. But there is nothing in the public record to indicate Wainstein was drawn into the internal Bush administration debates over anti-terrorism interrogation tactics or surveillance.

A Senate confirmation hearing would surely probe his role and views on these events.

Other names have surfaced.

Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., has backed New York Police Department Commissioner Ray Kelly, a 69-year-old former top Treasury law enforcement official who some believe would rather run for mayor of New York.

Gates: US expects to hand off Libya lead in 'days'

ON BOARD A MILITARY AIRCRAFT (AP)—U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates said Sunday that the U.S. expects to turn control of the Libya military mission over to a coalition—probably headed either by the French and British or by NATO—"in a matter of days."

In his first public remarks since the start of the bombings, Gates said President Barack Obama felt very strongly about limiting America's role in the operation, adding that the president is "more aware than almost anybody of the stress on the military."

"We agreed to use our unique capabilities and the breadth of those capabilities at the front of this process, and then we expected in a matter of days to be able to turn over the primary responsibility to others," Gates told reporters traveling with him to Russia. "We will continue to support the coalition, we will be a member of the coalition, we will have a military role in the coalition, but we will not have the preeminent role."

The two key possibilities, he said, are a combined British-French command or the use of a NATO command. He acknowledged there is "some sensitivity on the part of the Arab League to being seen to be operating under a NATO umbrella."

AP

U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates speaks about Libya as he briefs reporters on board a military plane en route to St. Petersburg, Russia, Sunday, March 20, 2011.

Gates' comments came as American ships and aircraft continued to pound Libya, taking out key radar, communications and surface-to-air missile sites along its Mediterranean coast. Even as his military was under siege, Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi vowed to endure through a long war against what he called colonial crusader aggression by the international coalition.

The Pentagon chief had cautioned early on about getting involved in Libya's civil war, telling Congress that taking out Libya's air defenses was tantamount to war. Others have worried that the mission could put the U.S. on a path to deeper military involvement in yet another Muslim country—even as nearly 150,000 troops continue to battle in Afghanistan and Iraq.

ACROSS THE NATION

About 35 arrested at rally for Wikileaks suspect

TRIANGLE, Va. (AP)—Wearing T-shirts and carrying signs bearing the smiling image of Army Pfc. Bradley Manning, hundreds of people rallied Sunday outside the base where he's being detained on charges of providing classified data to Wikileaks. About 35 people were arrested by police in riot gear after they refused to vacate an intersection in front of the entrance to Marine Corps Base Quantico. The rally was held along with more than two dozen others around the world to protest Manning's detention in Quantico's brig. Manning is confined alone in his cell for all but an hour a day. Each night, he is stripped naked and given a suicide-proof smock to wear to bed. His lawyer has called the treatment degrading, and Amnesty International says it may violate his human rights.

6-year-old SC boy killed when train ride overturns

SPARTANBURG, S.C. (AP)—Officials in South Carolina say a train ride at a park overturned, killing a 6-year-old boy and sending a dozen children and adults to the hospital. Spartanburg County Coroner Rusty Clevenger says 6-year-old Benjamin Samuel Easler of Gaffney died Saturday. About 20 people were on the train when it crashed at Cleveland Park. Spartanburg Police spokesman Art Littlejohn says more than a dozen children and adults were taken to the hospital.

Bail at $50,000 for sons arrested in mom's death

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP)—A judge has sent bail at $50,000 each for two sons of a woman who was found dead in her Albuquerque home with open wounds. Both 40-year-old Jason Mariner and 36-year-old Clayton Mariner are charged with neglect of a resident and tampering with evidence. A criminal complaint says 64-year-old Karen Mariner had many bedsores, some bones were visible and some of the wounds were infected when she was discovered dead on Friday. Police say Clayton Mariner said his mother suffered from multiple sclerosis and that he and his brother were her caregivers and paid by the state for their roles.

Asia

Japan's disaster toll rises with 18,000 deaths

FUKUSHIMA, Japan (AP)—The toll of Japan's triple disaster came into clearer focus Monday after police estimates showed more than 18,000 people died, the World Bank said rebuilding may cost $235 billion and more cases of radiation-tainted vegetables and tap water turned up.

Japanese officials reported progress over the weekend in their battle to gain control over a nuclear complex that began leaking radiation after suffering quake and tsunami damage, though the crisis was far from over, with a dangerous new surge in pressure reported in one of the plant's six reactors.

The announcement by Japan's Health Ministry late Sunday that tests had detected excess amounts of radioactive elements on canola and chrysanthemum greens marked a low moment in a day that had been peppered with bits of positive news: First, a teenager and his grandmother were found alive nine days after being trapped in their earthquake-shattered home. Then, the operator of the overheated nuclear plant said two of the six reactor units were safely cooled down.

"We consider that now we have come to a situation where we are very close to getting the situation under control," Deputy Cabinet Secretary Tetsuro Fukuyama said.

Still, serious problems remained at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear complex. Pressure unexpectedly rose in a third unit's reactor, meaning plant operators may need to deliberately release radioactive steam. That has only added to public anxiety over radiation that began leaking from the plant after a monstrous earthquake and tsunami devastated northeastern Japan on March 11 and left the plant unstable. As day broke Monday, Japan's military resumed dousing of the complex's troubled Unit 4.

AP

Japanese soldiers carry the wrapped body of a victim in the earthquake and tsunami destroyed town of Onagawa, Miyagi Prefecture, northeastern Japan Sunday, March 20, 2011.

The World Bank said in report Monday that Japan may need five years to rebuild from the catastrophic disasters, which caused up to $235 billion in damage, saying the cost to private insurers will be up to $33 billion and that the government will spend $12 billion on reconstruction in the current national budget and much more later.

The safety of food and water was of particular concern. The government halted shipments of spinach from one area and raw milk from another near the nuclear plant after tests found iodine exceeded safety limits. Tokyo's tap water, where iodine turned up Friday, now has cesium. Rain and dust are also tainted.

Early Monday , the Health Ministry advised Iitate, a village of 6,000 people about 30 kilometers (19 miles) northwest of the Fukushima plant, not to drink tap water due to elevated levels of iodine. Ministry spokesman Takayuki Matsuda said iodine three times the normal level was detected there—about one twenty-sixth of the level of a chest X-ray in one liter of water.

In all cases, the government said the radiation levels were too small to pose an immediate health risk.

But Tsugumi Hasegawa was skeptical as she cared for her 4-year-old daughter at a shelter in a gymnasium crammed with 1,400 people about 80 kilometers (50 miles) from the plant.

"I still have no idea what the numbers they are giving about radiation levels mean. It's all so confusing," said Hasegawa, 29, from the small town of Futuba in the shadow of the nuclear complex. "And I wonder if they aren't playing down the dangers to keep us from panicking. I don't know who to trust."

All six of the nuclear complex's reactor units saw trouble after the disasters knocked out cooling systems. In a small advance, the plant's operator declared Units 5 and 6—the least troublesome—under control after their nuclear fuel storage pools cooled to safe levels. Progress was made to reconnect two other units to the electric grid and in pumping seawater to cool another reactor and replenish it and a sixth reactor's storage pools.

But the buildup in pressure inside the vessel holding Unit 3's reactor presented some danger, forcing officials to consider venting. The tactic produced explosions of radioactive gas during the early days of the crisis.

"Even if certain things go smoothly, there would be twists and turns," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yukio Edano told reporters. "At the moment, we are not so optimistic that there will be a breakthrough."

Growing concerns about radiation add to the overwhelming chain of disasters Japan has struggled with since the 9.0-magnitude quake. The resulting tsunami ravaged the northeastern coast. All told, police estimates show more than about 18,400 died. More than 15,000 deaths are likely in Miyagi, the prefecture that took the full impact of the wave, said a police spokesman.

"It is very distressing as we recover more bodies day by days," said Hitoshi Sugawara, the spokesman.

Police in other parts of the disaster area declined to provide estimates, but confirmed about 3,400 deaths. Nationwide, official figures show the disasters killing more than 8,600 people, and leaving more than 13,200 people missing, but those two lists may have some overlap.

The disasters have displaced another 452,000, who are living in shelters.

Fuel, food and water remain scarce. The government in recent days acknowledged being caught ill-prepared by an enormous disaster that the prime minister has called the worst crisis since World War II.

Bodies are piling up in some of the devastated communities and badly decomposing even amid chilly rain and snow.

NKorea accuses SKorea, US of border provocation

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea warned South Korea it may retaliate after accusing U.S. troops of conducting reconnaissance near the tense border and taking photos with women and drinking there.

South Korea's Defense Ministry and the American-led U.N. Command—which oversees an armistice that ended the Korean War in the 1950s—dismissed the accusations as groundless. They were "not true" and the North made similar accusations in the past, U.N. Command spokesman Kim Yong-kyu said.

The U.N. Command has jurisdiction over the demilitarized zone and command troops have only patrolled along the Korean demilitarized zone, Kim and South Korean Defense Ministry officials said.

North Korea's conveyed the warning to South Korea on Sunday, accusing Seoul of permitting "the U.S. imperialist aggressor troops" to come as close as some 65 feet (20 meters) from the border to monitor vehicle and personnel movements in the North, according to Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency.

A KCNA dispatch accused the U.S. troops of bringing women to the area and take photos together, drinking and hurling liquor bottles to North Korean guard posts.

"The North side warns that it will no longer tolerate the above-said grave military provocation" that could trigger unspecified retaliation and cost human casualties, the KCNA said.

Tension on the peninsula sharply spiked last year after a warship was sunk and the North shelled a South Korean front-line island, killing a total of 50 South Koreans. North Korea denies it attacked the ship.

The Korean peninsula technically remains in state of war because the Korean War armistice has never been replaced with a peace treaty. About 28,500 U.S. soldiers are stationed in South Korea to help deter potential North Korean aggression.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Death toll in Pakistan mine explosion rises to 21

QUETTA, Pakistan (AP)—The death toll from a Pakistan mine explosion rose to 21 on Monday and there was little chance of survival for the 31 men still trapped, a senior mining official said. Poisonous methane gas was hampering the work of rescue workers, who have been working to save the men since an explosion early Sunday caused the mine to collapse. "We are trying our best to rescue as many workers as we can, but the chance of finding survivors is bleak now," said Iftikhar Ahmed, a top mine inspector. Many of the miners they have found dead so far suffocated from the gas, he said.

Google says China blocking its email services

BEIJING (AP)—Google said Monday the Chinese government is interfering with its email services in China, making it difficult for users to gain access to its Gmail program, amid an intensified Internet crackdown following widespread unrest in the Middle East. Google Inc. said its engineers have determined there are no technical problems with the email service or its main website. "There is no technical issue on our side; we have checked extensively. This is a government blockage carefully designed to look like the problem is with Gmail," the company said in a brief statement.

PH police: Abu Sayyaf kidnaps 3 fishermen

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Suspected Abu Sayyaf militants kidnapped three crew members of a fishing boat in the southern Philippines and called their company to demand ransom, in the latest reminder of the lingering danger of the battle-crippled terrorist group, police said Monday.

The boat's captain and two other crew members were fishing off southern Sulu province Saturday when Abu Sayyaf gunmen aboard a motor boat approached and abducted them at gunpoint. The militants called the captives' fishing company in nearby Zamboanga city on Sunday, apparently to demand ransom, police Director Felicisimo Khu Jr. said.

The al-Qaida-linked group, notorious for bombings, kidnappings for ransom and beheadings, has been blacklisted by Washington as a terrorist organization. U.S.-backed offensives have led to the loss of several of its top leaders and hindered its ability to launch bombings and other attacks.

A government threat assessment report seen by The Associated Press last month said the 410 remaining Abu Sayyaf fighters, who remain without a central leader, have been hounded by funding problems, forcing them to kidnap even poor victims to get ransom.

The new kidnappings and a recent deadly bombing in Sulu indicate the danger posed by the militants despite their many battle setbacks and underscore the difficulty of fighting terrorism, Khu said.

Intelligence reports show that the kidnappers and their captors were moving about in Sulu's coastal town of Patikul, where the Abu Sayyaf has mountain strongholds, he said.

Patikul officials were trying to establish contact with the kidnappers to negotiate because a rescue attempt might danger the hostages, Khu said.

"These people will not hesitate to harm if they're cornered," he said.

The militants killed at least six hostages whose families failed to pay ransom immediately last year, according to the government report.

In their heyday, the Abu Sayyaf seized 21 people, mostly European tourists, from the Malaysian resort of Sipadan in 2000, and abducted three Americans and 17 Filipinos from the Philippines' Dos Palmas resort the following year.

All the Sipadan hostages were freed, reportedly in exchange for huge ransoms. One of the three American hostages from Dos Palmas was beheaded, while a second was killed during an army rescue attempt. The third American was wounded but freed in the army rescue operation.

World

WORLD BRIEFS

Egypt: Constitution changes pass in referendum

CAIRO (AP)—Egyptian voters overwhelmingly approved changes in the constitution, opening the way for parliamentary and presidential elections within months, according to final results from a landmark referendum announced Sunday. Opponents fear the swift timetable could boost the fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood and members of the former ruling party. The Brotherhood had campaigned heavily for a "yes" vote in the referendum. Critics say that since it and the former ruling party are the best organized political forces in the country, they stand to gain the most in an early election—which will bring in Egypt's first democratically elected government to replace the regime of ousted President Hosni Mubarak. The results are likely to open a frenzied campaign season, with liberal pro-democracy forces scrambling to put together political parties to contest the upcoming races.

Yemen's weakened president abandoned by own tribe

SANAA, Yemen (AP)—The U.S.-backed president of Yemen suffered a devastating political blow on Sunday when his own powerful tribe demanded his resignation, joining religious leaders, young people and the country's traditional opposition in calls for an end to his three decades in power. Massive crowds flooded cities and towns around the impoverished and volatile nation, screaming in grief and anger as they mourned dozens of protesters killed Friday when President Ali Abdullah Saleh's security forces opened fire from rooftops on a demonstration in the capital. Saleh appeared to be trying to hold on, firing his entire Cabinet ahead of what one government official said was a planned mass resignation, but making no mention of stepping down himself. Yemen's ambassador to the United Nations and its human rights minister had announced their resignations earlier in the day.

Haiti chooses new leader, hoping this one delivers

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—Haitians scarred by decades of poverty, political corruption and natural disasters cast ballots Sunday for president in hopes a new leader could do what others have not: Replace homes and schools in the earthquake-devastated capital, improve education and create some optimism for the future. Voters chose between Michel "Sweet Micky" Martelly, a popular musician who has never held public office, and Mirlande Manigat, a former first lady and senator and longtime fixture on the political scene. Voters formed what for the most part were orderly lines throughout the country, some shrugging off delays of three hours. Preliminary results are expected March 31. "A lot of governments come through to make change for themselves and their families," Jean-Claude Henry, a 43-year-old economist, said after he voted at a school in the Delmas section of Port-au-Prince, the capital. "We want radical change for the population."

Gadhafi vows 'long war' as strikes hit his forces

TRIPOLI, Libya (AP)—Moammar Gadhafi vowed a "long war" as allied forces launched a second night of strikes on Libya on Sunday, and jubilant rebels who only a day before were in danger of being crushed by his forces now boasted they would bring him down. The U.S. military said the international assault would hit any Gadhafi forces on the ground that are attacking the opposition.

The U.S. military said the bombardment so far—a rain of Tomahawk cruise missiles and precision bombs from American and European aircraft, including long-range stealth B-2 bombers—had succeeded in heavily degrading Gadhafi's air defenses.

The international campaign went beyond hitting anti-aircaft sites. U.S., British and French planes blasted a line of tanks that had been moving on the rebel capital Benghazi, in the opposition-held eastern half of the country. On Sunday, at least seven demolished tanks smoldered in a field 12 miles (20 kilometers) south of Benghazi, many of them with their turrets and treads blown off, alongside charred armored personnel carriers, jeeps and SUVs of the kind used by Gadhafi fighters.

An administration building a few yards from Gadhafi's tent in his huge personal compound was hit and badly damaged late Sunday. An Associated Press photographer at the scene said half of the round, three-story building was knocked down, smoke was rising from it and pieces of a cruise missile were scattered around the scene. About 300 Gadhafi supporters were in the compound at the time. It was not known if any were hurt.

"I feel like in two days max we will destroy Gadhafi," said Ezzeldin Helwani, 35, a rebel standing next to the smoldering wreckage of an armored personnel carrier, the air thick with smoke and the pungent smell of burning rubber. In a grisly sort of battle trophy, celebrating fighters hung a severed goat's head with a cigarette in its mouth from the turret of one of the gutted tanks.

The strikes that began early Sunday gave immediate, if temporary, relief to Benghazi, which the day before had been under a heavy attack that killed at least 120 people. The city's calm on Sunday highlighted the dramatic turnaround that the allied strikes bring to Libya's month-old upheaval: For the past 10 days, Gadhafi's forces had been on a triumphant offensive against the rebel-held east, driving opposition fighters back with the overwhelming firepower of tanks, artillery, warplanes and warships.

Now Gadhafi's forces are potential targets for U.S. and European strikes. The U.N. resolution authorizing international military action in Libya not only sets up a no-fly zone but allows "all necessary measures" to prevent attacks on civilians.

But the U.S. military, for the time being at the lead of the international campaign, is trying to walk a fine line over the end game of the assault. It is avoiding for now any appearance that it aims to take out Gadhafi or help the rebels oust him, instead limiting its stated goals to protecting civilians.

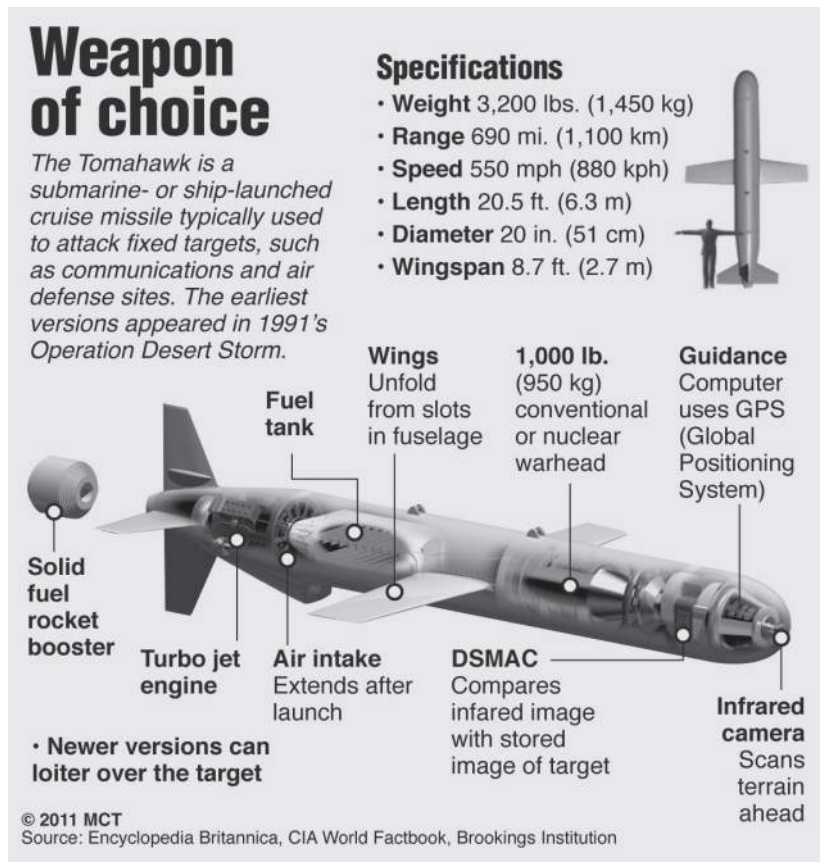
At the Pentagon, Navy Vice Adm. William E. Gortney underlined that strikes are not specifically targeting the Libyan leader or his residence in Tripoli. He said that any of Gadhafi's ground forces advancing on the rebels were open targets.

"If they are moving on opposition forces ... yes, we will take them under attack," he told reporters.

"We judge these strikes to have been very effective in significantly degrading the regime's air defense capability," Gortney said. "We believe his forces are under significant stress and suffering from both isolation and a good deal of confusion."

AP

Libyan people celebrate on a tank belonging to the forces of Moammar Gadhafi in the outskirts of Benghazi, eastern Libya, Sunday, March 20, 2011.


Weapon of choice
The Tomahawk is a submarine- or ship-launched cruise missile typically used to attack fixed targets, such as communications and air defense sites. The earliest versions appeared in 1991's Operation Desert Storm.
Specifications
• Weight 3,200 lbs. (1,450 kg)
• Range 690 mi. (1,100 km)
• Speed 550 mph (880 kph)
• Length 20.5 ft. (6.3 m)
• Diameter 20 in. (51 cm)
• Wingspan 8.7 ft. (2.7 m)
Wings Unfold from slots in fuselage
Fuel tank
1,000 lb. (950 kg) conventional or nuclear warhead
Guidance Computer uses GPS (Global Positioning System)
Solid fuel rocket booster
Turbo jet engine
Air intake Extends after launch
DSMAC Compares infared image with stored image of target
Infrared camera Scans terrain ahead
• Newer versions can loiter over the target
© 2011 MCT
Source: Encyclopedia Britannica, CIA World Factbook, Brookings Institution

A military official said Air Force B-2 stealth bombers flew 25 hours in a round trip from Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri and dropped 45 2,000-pound bombs.

What happens if rebel forces eventually go on the offensive against Gadhafi's troops remains unclear. Gortney would not say whether strikes would hit Libyan troops fighting back against rebel assaults.

U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates said late Sunday that the U.S. expects turn over control of the operation to a coalition headed by France, Britain or NATO "in a matter of days," reflecting concern that the U.S. military was stretched thin by its current missions. Turkey was blocking NATO action, which requires agreement by all 28 members of the alliance.

Danish Defense Minister Gitte Lillelund Bech confirmed to The Associated Press that four Danish F-16s took part in missions over Libya on Sunday. "We are using military means, but there are also a lot of other means we can use to make sure that Gadhafi will not be running Libya in the future," she said.

Sunday night, heavy anti-aircraft fire erupted repeatedly in the capital, Tripoli, with arcs of red tracer bullets and exploding shells in the dark sky—marking the start of a second night of international strikes. Gadhafi supporters in the streets shot automatic weapons in the air in a show of defiance. It was not immediately known what was being targeted in the new strikes.

Libyan army spokesman Col. Milad al-Fokhi said Libyan army units had been ordered to cease fire at 9 p.m. local time, but the hour passed with no letup in military activity.

Gadhafi vowed to fight on. In a phone call to Libyan state television Sunday, he said he would not let up on Benghazi and said the government had opened up weapons depots to all Libyans, who were now armed with "automatic weapons, mortars and bombs." State television said Gadhafi's supporters were converging on airports as human shields.

"We promise you a long war," he said.

He called the international assault "simply a colonial crusader aggression that may ignite another large-scale crusader war."

Throughout the day Sunday, Libyan TV showed a stream of what it said were popular demonstrations in support of Gadhafi in Tripoli and other towns and cities. It showed cars with horns blaring, women ululating, young men waving green flags and holding up pictures of the Libyan leader. Women and children chanted, "God, Moammar and Libya, that's it!"

"Our blood is green, not red," one unidentified woman told the broadcaster, referring to the signature color of Gadhafi's regime. "He is our father, we will be with him to the last drop of blood. Our blood is green with our love for him."

Among the targets hit in the first night of strikes before dawn Sunday was one of Libya's main air bases, on Tripoli's outskirts, the opposition said. Also hit, it said, was an air force complex outside Misrata, the last rebel-held city in western Libya—which has been under siege the past week by Gadhafi forces. Those forces have been bombarding the city from the complex, which houses an air base and a military academy. Despite the strikes, the troops resumed bombarding Misrata during the day Sunday, said Switzerland-based Libyan activist Fathi al-Warfali.

"Misrata is the only city in western Libya not under Gadhafi's control; he is trying hard to change its position," said al-Warfali, who told The Associated Press he was in touch with residents in the city.

In Benghazi, the rebel capital and first city to fall to the uprising that began Feb. 15, residents were celebrating the dramatic turn of events. The day before, Gadhafi's forces pounded the city of around 700,000 with artillery and tank shells and punched through the outskirts in heavy street battles. Along the tree-lined road into Benghazi, buildings riddled with pockmarks and burnt-out cars, buses and tanks gave testimony to the ferocity of the fighting.

Focus

Rich Japan's descent into misery stuns

AP
A woman, second from right, who lost her mother and her 3-year-old son, reacts after she confirmed their bodies under the rubble of her house in Miyako, northern Japan Monday, March 14, 2011 following Friday's massive earthquake and the ensuing tsunami.

FIRST PERSON ACCOUNT

By TODD PITMAN
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Editor's Note: AP Bangkok Bureau Chief Todd Pitman, who has spent much of his career reporting from war zones in Afghanistan, Iraq and the Middle East, as well as some of the most troubled nations in Africa, has found one of his most challenging assignments in Asia's richest and most technologically advanced country.

SHIZUGAWA, Japan (AP)—Bodies are strewn among the knotted skeletons of entire towns. Military helicopters clatter overhead. Survivors who lost everything huddle under blankets in schools-turned-shelters as foreign governments dispatch aid and urge their citizens to flee.

After years spent reporting from desperate and war-torn corners of the world, the scenes I've witnessed here are unsettlingly familiar.

It's the setting that's not.

Here, in one of the richest and most advanced nations on earth, I've found one of most challenging assignments of my career.

Japan's cascading disasters were spawned by one of the planet's strongest quakes in a century. Next came a tsunami that killed more than 10,000 people and demolished vast swaths of the northeastern coast in minutes. That triggered a nuclear emergency that has amplified a deepening sense of apocalyptic doom.

The grim sights have been widely compared to the astonishing destruction wrought here during World War II. But it also reminds me of Lebanon in 2006—when Israel's Hezbollah-seeking rockets leveled whole villages—or any other conflict zone filled with refugees and military convoys.

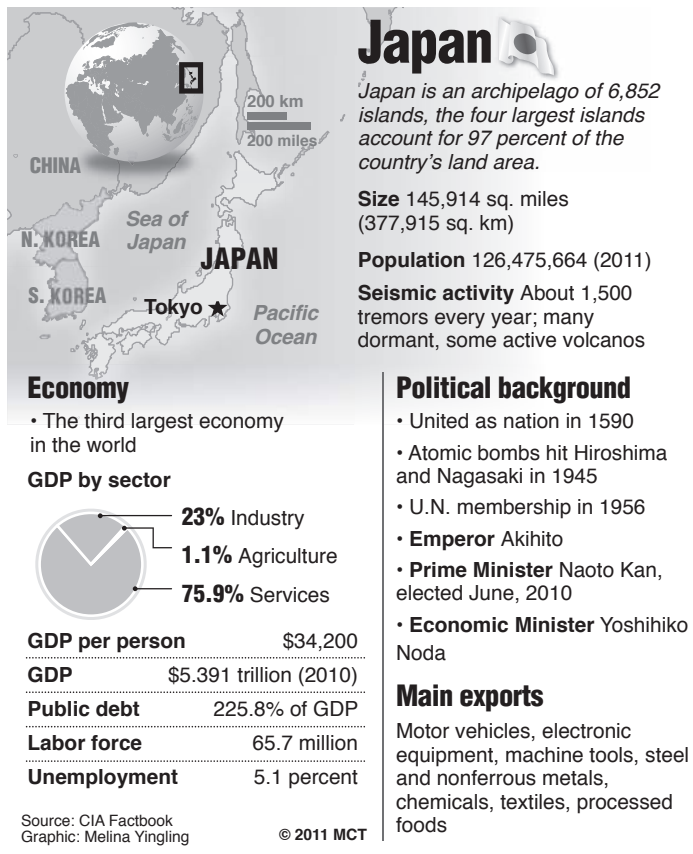
When I stepped off the plane in Tokyo the morning after the quake, Narita International Airport was quiet. The escalators had been shut off. Stranded passengers lay on sleeping bags throughout the terminal.

Outside, not a single taxi stood waiting. We finally found one willing to take us downtown, but only at the departure hall where a dozen others dropping off fleeing travelers had already refused to give us a ride.

Later, I headed north toward the tsunami zone with a team of three other Associated Press journalists. There were obstacles at every turn. The GPS system could not know that some roads no longer existed or that others had been blocked by mudslides or ripped apart during the mighty tremor.

That first night, it took 14 hours on backroads to cover 180 miles (300 kilometers). When we finally reached the ruined port of Sendai the next morning, we found survivors wearing surgical masks picking through the wrecked junkyard of their annihilated city.

In a tech-savvy society better known for hosting robot marathons, the crisis has produced surreal images, some more apt to appear in a novel about life after a nuclear holocaust: Cut off with no electricity and no phone reception, the hungry and isolated braving long lines outside near-empty grocery stores just to get food; the desperate homeless warming frigid hands in heavy snow above fires fueled by the wooden planks of their own pulverized homes.


200 km
200 miles
CHINA
Sea of Japan
N. KOREA
JAPAN
S. KOREA
Tokyo
Pacific Ocean
Japan
Japan is an archipelago of 6,852 islands, the four largest islands account for 97 percent of the country's land area.
Size 145,914 sq. miles (377,915 sq. km)
Population 126,475,664 (2011)
Seismic activity About 1,500 tremors every year; many dormant, some active volcanos
Economy
• The third largest economy in the world
GDP by sector
23% Industry
1.1% Agriculture
75.9% Services
GDP per person $34,200
GDP $5.391 trillion (2010)
Public debt 225.8% of GDP
Labor force 65.7 million
Unemployment 5.1 percent
Political background
• United as nation in 1590
• Atomic bombs hit Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945
• U.N. membership in 1956
• Emperor Akihito
• Prime Minister Naoto Kan, elected June, 2010
• Economic Minister Yoshihiko Noda
Main exports
Motor vehicles, electronic equipment, machine tools, steel and nonferrous metals, chemicals, textiles, processed foods
Source: CIA Factbook
Graphic: Melina Yingling
© 2011 MCT

In Kesennuma, I saw the hull of a behemoth ship parked inland on a sea of burnt debris beside a wrecked 7-Eleven.

In Shizugawa, a lone Japanese soldier relentlessly swept a small strip of pavement that somehow survived, a futile and slightly bizarre effort considering the entire city surrounding it was reduced to a mashed heap of garbage.

Most of these towns have simply ceased to exist. In some, far from the ravaged coast, everything is still closed: restaurants, malls, pinball arcades, drugstores—even ATM machines because they cannot function without power.

We have survived mostly on snack food—peanuts and potato chips and canned coffee scavenged from mostly empty street-side vending machines. When we found one small food store open, it's dwindling stocks already plundered, we bought everything left that we could fit in our car—raw sausages, dried squid, bread.

Finding fuel is a constant concern. Vast lines of cars queue ominously at every gas station—even those that are closed—waiting up to 36 hours to buy limited rations.

We need gas not only to move, but to charge our laptops and satellite transmitting equipment through an inverter that connects to our car's cigarette lighter—which at one overloaded point blew a fuse, threatening to bring our mission to a halt.

One big problem with Japan's crisis: It doesn't feel like it's over.

Every night, we are woken by aftershocks. These come during the day, too—during interviews, while parked in our car—grim reminders that what started it all can be unleashed again, anytime.

Every day, we hear snippets of news about the possibility of total nuclear meltdown at the Fukishima Dai-ichi plant, more than 150 miles (240 kilometers) from where we have been working. There is talk of helicopter crews testing positive for radiation exposure, of foreign governments urging their nationals to leave.

The experience got even more surreal when AP issued me a pocket-sized "dosimeter"—a device that looks like a Maglite flashlight and monitors surrounding radiation levels from the safety of one's pocket—and a ration of potassium iodide to protect my thyroid from cancer in the event of a serious nuclear event.

With heavy snow now adding another level of desolation, I sometimes wonder: If it gets any worse, can we get off this island?

With nowhere else to stay, we spent many nights in makeshift shelters, sleeping alongside displaced families wrapped in blankets on the crowded wooden floors of school basketball courts.

At all of them, large wall-mounted clocks are still frozen at 2:46 p.m.—give or take a few minutes—the moment when the earthquake changed everything.

It's hard not to be impressed with the immense grace of the people we've encountered along the way. I've seen no fighting, no shouting, only patience.

We've been offered miso soup and rice balls—by people who have lost everything and have no idea when or how they'll ever go home. The shelters we've stayed at are so well-organized that one even offered different trash bags for recycling, and there were group calisthenics at dawn.

On the surface, there seems too little emotion, too much stoicism. But loss is everywhere.

At Ishinoseke, a man who has not seen his wife since he spoke to her minutes before the tsunami told me with the utmost certainty that she MUST be alive. After failing to find her at seven different shelters, he began searching for her inside a city gym-turned-morgue where the bodies of 300 tsunami victims lay under blue tarps, waiting to be identified.

At a shelter in Shizugawa, I watched an elderly man tell a group of survivors that those who'd gone missing had not yet been confirmed dead.

Was it denial or real hope? I couldn't tell.

As he read out the names of dozens who have not been seen since March 11, women listening intently on their knees began weeping in silence.

Overdrive

With gas prices rising, first electric vehicle owners are charged up

By TIFFANY HSU
LOS ANGELES TIMES

AP
Roy Olson fights high gas prices by driving his Chevy Volt electric car. He is shown in Rancho Mirage, California, in February 2011.

LOS ANGELES — Gas prices are spiking and drivers are fretting. But not Roy Olson.

The Rancho Mirage, Calif., retiree drives a plug-in hybrid electric Chevrolet Volt, which he said runs for about 40 miles on battery before switching to traditional fuel. Because he charges the car nightly, Olson has yet to visit a gas station.

"Having our future in our own hands is really important," he said. "I'm insulated from what's going on in the Middle East. If I had to pick one reason for getting this car, that's probably No. 1."

Olson is part of a small group of auto fanatics, environmentalists and technology enthusiasts who bought the first batch of Volts and Nissan's all-electric Leafs that rolled out in December. So far, several hundred have reached drivers, including talk show host Jay Leno and actress Alyssa Milano, with tens of thousands on waiting lists.

Chevrolet has sold fewer than 1,000 Volts; the numbers for the Leaf are around 200. Chevrolet and Nissan said they expect sales to grow as they ramp up production this year. Even so, the cars will barely register among the 13 million vehicles Americans are expected to purchase this year.

The early adopters are no longer wringing their hands over their decision to be the first to drive the vehicles.

"I could have looked very sensible or very dumb in the decision to buy this car," said Michael J. Walsh of his new ocean blue Leaf. "It's looking like the former."

Even if gas hits $5 a gallon, electricity rates for charging won't change much, he said, and drivers dependent on foreign oil — and vulnerable to foreign conflicts — may start to covet the battery powered cars they once mocked.

"We're at the tip of the spear," said Walsh, 49, of Garden Grove, Calif. "First, people will cut back on driving, and then they'll look for alternatives."

But cruising around in an electric vehicle hasn't been an entirely smooth ride. Drivers have reported difficulty with home and public charging systems and trimmed travel plans because of limited battery range.

The cars aren't cheap. Olson nearly got sticker shock from the Volt's price tag: $40,000 before government incentives that shaved $7,500 off of the cost.

Same for Walsh and his Leaf, with a sticker price of $34,000 before incentives. "The economy is iffy and we already had another car that's working fine," he said. "It probably doesn't make any financial sense whatsoever. But then again, this is a purely green purchase."

Walsh, a self-described technology geek, thought his early adopter days were over after he "got burned" buying massive satellite dishes and $1,600 brick-sized cell phones that quickly grew outdated. But still he longed for an electric vehicle.

The $100,000 Tesla Roadster was out of his price range. He nixed the Volt and the Toyota Prius hybrid because both used fossil fuels. He considered retrofitting an existing car or importing an electric vehicle from abroad.

Then came the Leaf, one of the first mass marketed all-electric cars for sale from a major automaker.

"It was something I had to be a part of right away," Walsh said. "Even 15 years ago, I realized that EVs were going to be the next big thing, the Car 2.0."

Some drivers remember the last brief heyday of electric cars, with the debut of General Motors' EV1 in 1996. But the program was scrapped in 1999 and the cars were crushed due to low demand, according to the automaker.

This time around, most electric vehicle early adopters are hoping for a better reception.

President Obama wants 1 million such vehicles on the road by 2015. Automakers including Honda, Toyota and Mitsubishi are scrambling to roll out electric models.

"For new technology to succeed, it can't be equal — it has to be better," said Leno, who has driven his Volt more than 1,200 miles and featured an electric Ford Focus on his NBC show.

Battery-powered vehicles could turn gas guzzlers into recreational curiosities, he joked, "like snowmobiles — something for the guys to drive around on the weekends."

First though, automakers must win over American drivers who are wary of expensive and potentially fickle batteries. Consumer Reports found last week that in cold weather, the Volt's battery lasted just 23 to 28 miles instead of up to 40 as Chevrolet had estimated.

"It's not really much of a money saver in many places," reviewers concluded. "Cheaper electricity or more expensive gas could tip the scales in its favor. For now, it seems that owning a Volt is an expensive way to be green."

Local communities will likely need to make building public charging stations a priority before electric vehicles catch on with the masses.

Walsh said he knows of just a few public charging stations scattered at Nissan dealerships. At home, he has a charger in his garage timed for cheaper night charging. He carries a modified portable unit to juice up at the Hawthorne aerospace company where he works.

Nissan says its Leaf battery lasts 100 miles per charge, so Walsh must be diligent about planning his schedule around his 60-mile roundtrip commute. He can usually afford a short lunch trip but rations air conditioning because it depletes the battery more quickly.

Walsh said he won't buy another electric car unless it can make it to Las Vegas on one charge.

"It's not range anxiety nor an inconvenience, just an awareness of what I have to do," he said. "But I haven't pushed the envelope too much."

Olson said he ran into kinks at home, where he wanted a 240-volt charger that would power up the car in four hours. He ended up with a slower 120-volt system that he set up himself after delays with the installation company.

He also wanted to install a dedicated electric meter for the car, which would have charged it at a discounted rate. But Southern California Edison lagged when setting up an inspection of his home's wiring, Olson said, so he decided to power the Volt with the meter he uses for the rest of his house.

"SCE talks a good game, but they need to be better about making it easier for people with EVs," he said.

Small amounts of ethanol OK in regular gas

By PAUL BRAND
STAR TRIBUNE (MINNEAPOLIS)

QUESTION: I have a 2000 Chevy S-10. My owner's manual says not to use ethanol gasoline, but it's getting difficult to find gasoline without it. Will it do any damage to my engine if I use no more than a 10 percent blend?

ANSWER: No. The V6 engine in your S-10 will operate safely on "regular unleaded," which has been a 10 percent ethanol-gasoline blend for more than a decade. What your owner's manual doesn't want you to use is E85 or fuel with methanol.

■ ■ ■

Q: I drive a 1998 Chevy 1500, a six-cylinder two-wheel-drive pickup, with 150,000 miles on it. The heater fan used to work fine. Then, at times, it would come on a few minutes after I turned it on. Now the fan comes on only once every week or two, and only about five minutes after turning the fan on. This has not made for enjoyable driving during the past two months of cold weather.

A: I'll bet! Automobile heater fans operate on 12 to 14 volts supplied by the battery and charging system. At full voltage, the fan runs at high speed. A series of resistors drops the voltage in steps to provide medium and low speeds. If the fan works only on high, the blower motor resistor block is suspect. But intermittent operation at any speed usually points to overheated contacts in the fan's wiring harness or a bad fan motor. Inspect the connections at the fan motor, resistor block and relays under the dash for any evidence of arcing or overheating.

If the fan has not come on for several minutes, feel around the fan switch on the dash with your fingers. Does the switch seem hot? High resistance in the switch or its connection can cause intermittent fan operation.

■ ■ ■

Q: I have a 1992 Ford F-150 six-cylinder 4x4. Whenever I park the truck for more than 10 minutes, one or more of the brakes seizes up until I drive forward several feet. The brakes then work fine until I park it again. I recently replaced front and rear brakes, including a right rear brake cylinder that was leaking, but the problem still exists. What is happening?

A: There's a simple way to find out which brake is sticking. After the vehicle has been parked overnight, jack up each wheel and physically try to rotate the wheel by hand. Another test for brake drag is to drive the vehicle for 20 minutes or so, pull off to a safe spot and touch each wheel as close to the wheel hub as you can with the back of your hand. Obviously, the wheels will be warm to the touch, but if one brake is dragging significantly, you'll instantly feel the difference. Don't burn your hand; that wheel will be extremely hot. Just touch each wheel for an instant; the back of your hand is very sensitive to heat.

If a front brake is dragging, the likely cause is corrosion on the caliper's slider pins or on the caliper piston. If the caliper can't slide freely on the pins or the piston cannot slide freely in its bore, the brake may not release fully, causing drag and sticking.

If a rear brake is dragging, the wheel cylinder pistons may be binding due to corrosion, the return springs may be weak, or the parking brake cable might be frozen with the parking brake partially applied.

With the age and mileage of your truck, bleeding the brakes to fill the hydraulic system with fresh brake fluid would be a good idea, but there's a risk of breaking off a frozen bleed nipple or fitting.

Paul Brand, author of How to Repair Your Car*, is an automotive troubleshooter, driving instructor and former race-car driver. Readers may write to him at: Star Tribune, 425 Portland Ave. S., Minneapolis, Minn. 55488 or via e-mail at paulbrand@startribune.com. Please explain the problem in detail and include a daytime phone number. It isn't always possible to send a personal reply.*

Thrown by 'mpg' numbers for electric vehicles

By STEVEN COLE SMITH
THE ORLANDO SENTINEL

QUESTION: I'm very interested in the new technology in cars like the Nissan Leaf and Chevrolet Volt, and plan to buy one eventually, but I am also very confused. Fuel mileage is very important to me, and I don't understand the EPA ratings for both vehicles. The Leaf is all-electric, yet the EPA rates it at 99 miles per gallon. Per gallon of what? Electricity? Please explain.—William, Boca Raton, Fla.

ANSWER: As you can imagine, the Environmental Protection Agency's testing system has always been based on a petroleum-burning vehicle, which also worked reasonably well for regular hybrids. With the Volt, and especially the Leaf, the EPA was thrown for a loop. The EPA rates the Leaf with a mpg "equivalent" of 106 miles per gallon in the city, 92 highway, for a combined 99 mpg. How so? Because the EPA has calculated that 33.7 kilowatt hours of electricity is equivalent to one gallon of gasoline energy.

The EPA says the Leaf will go 73 miles on a single charge, which is much worse than I got when I test-drove the vehicle. As for the Volt, the EPA says it will go about 35 miles on pure electricity before the gasoline engine kicks in, which matches my tests. And its EPA rating even more confusing: The EPA rates the Volt at 93 mpg on pure electricity (using the aforementioned conversion formula), and 37 mpg on pure gasoline.

That's the explanation, and I'm sorry it's such a confusing one.

Steven Cole Smith is the automotive editor at the Orlando Sentinel *in Florida. Send questions to scsmith@orlandosentinel.com.*

Life & Style

Images of disaster in Japan lend visual power

By DAVID BAUDER
AP TELEVISION WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—Sometimes it's a fast-moving ooze: A street becomes a stream, grows into a river and then a raging mountain of moving debris. Sometimes, it's a wet curtain of water crashing over a shoreline, tossing trees, ships and cars casually aside as a child would a stack of Legos.

Until a week ago, a tsunami was one of the most mysterious of natural events, its devastating power usually evident only in the aftermath. Yet from the first moments the earth started to shudder on March 11, Japan's tsunami was one of the most recorded disasters ever to be captured on film, lending a visual power to story-telling unmatched since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks almost a decade ago.

Quake footage was available almost instantly: Office workers running outside as building chunks slam to the ground; skyscrapers swaying like evergreens in a windstorm; pictures falling off walls; store stock spilling to the floor. One man kept recording as his living room seemed to fall apart around him. His camera caught his shaky steps as he finally rushed outside. But as dramatic as the earthquake images were, the tsunami video—some of it live—was breathtaking. A handful of tourists captured the Indonesian tsunami in 2004, but there was much less variety and inferior film quality. Technology—particularly cell-phone cameras—was not what it has become today.

Japan, too, is unique—a nation that not only produces electronics but also focuses on technology, camera phones, handheld video and digital cameras. And it may also be the most well-wired country for recording such disasters. With its geologic history, seismic monitors and robotic cameras are mounted throughout the archipelago.

Japanese news crews quickly took to the streets and skies after the earthquake, leaving them well-positioned to capture the tsunami.

At times, they were too well-positioned: A video that surfaced late last week showed a local news crew abandoning a car with the tsunami approaching and rushing into a building as water began swirling around their feet.

What, though, do these images do? Do they change how we perceive the event? Do more higher-quality images of catastrophe make it seem more real or more movielike? Will we remember the 2011 Japan tsunami differently than its calamitous predecessors because we saw so much of it so quickly?

In the days that followed the earthquake, CNN producers constantly monitored social media sites to find newly posted material, and dozens of Japanese citizens sent footage directly to CNN, said Parisa Khosravi, senior vice president for CNN news-gathering worldwide.

"In this case, it certainly captured images that no one expected to see," she said. The story gave CNN its best ratings since President Barack Obama's inauguration in 2009, the Nielsen Co. said.

Viewers couldn't get enough—even those who were personally touched by it.

AP

In this video image taken on March 11, 2011, from Japan's NHK TV, a tsunami surge carrying debris sweeps between houses to reach poly tunnels on farmland near Sendai in Miyagi Prefecture Japan following a massive earth quake.

"I tried, but couldn't stop watching," said Maisararam from Banda Aceh, Indonesia, who lost her husband and three daughters in Indonesia's 2004 tsunami. "It was exactly the same, except they have this horrible footage, events unfolding right before your eyes."

One particularly arresting video showed water and debris rapidly rising as a group of people struggled to make it up a path to higher ground; CNN stopped rolling the shot—the fate of the crew unknown. In another instance, men who had raced to the top of a parking garage kept recording the tsunami even as one openly wondered whether he would survive or not.

The wealth of visual material stood in contrast to events at the earthquake-damaged Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear complex where six reactor units have had fires, explosions or partial meltdowns. As the water receded and attention turned to the crippled nuclear plant, the story became one of those events that television is poorly equipped to tell.

Images are elusive. Except for a handful of aerial shots, the drama at the plant has largely been seen in fuzzy video taken from many miles away. Occasionally, water is dumped on damaged nuclear reactors from the air, yet it's so difficult to see that it must be highlighted by editors in the pictures.

Evacuation zones have also led American TV networks to pull many of their teams out of the immediate area for safety reasons over radiation poisoning.

But no one knows what is really happening at the plant, or what will happen, and how much radiation is being exposed to how many people. That leads to less-than-illuminating reports, such as Lester Holt revealing on the "Today" show that his shoes tested positive for radiation.

Other than lost footwear, what did the incident really teach us?

Television frequently returned to old-fashioned and visually dull habits out of necessity, bringing a succession of experts before cameras to report the nuclear threat.

The uncertain aspects of the story quickly led to on-air debates over whether television was "hyping" the nuclear danger. NBC's "Nightly News" pointed a finger at the media in a report that minimized any danger to the United States. Fox News Channel's Shepard Smith labeled "sad and pathetic" Americans who bought anti-radiation pills in large numbers.

Yet his own network showed this headline Friday: "Growing Concern Over Radiation Plume Drifting Over Western United States."

But radiation is not a television event; it is, for the most part, something you cannot see—ambiguous, invisible, diffuse.

There was nothing ambiguous about the tsunami footage. In an era of unremitting visuals, it was imagery like none other—another example, in a time of technological change, of how we can watch the world unfold, even in its saddest, most frightening moments.

Domain '.xxx' approved for Web porn sites

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—You've heard of ".com" and ".org." Joining them soon will be their bawdy cousin: ".xxx."

On Friday, the board of directors of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, which oversees the Internet's naming system, approved the creation of a red-light district online for pornographic websites. It follows a decade-long battle over such a name.

The uproar over the idea has brought together unlikely bedfellows.

Religious groups argue that giving adult websites their own corner of the Internet legitimizes the content.

Pornographers worry it will ghettoize their sites. Although it's meant to be voluntary, they fear governments could try to mandate the domain's use, so that pornographic content is more easily blocked.

Diane Duke, executive director of the adult entertainment industry's Free Speech Coalition, said in a statement that ICANN has "disregarded overwhelming outpouring of opposition from the adult entertainment industry—the supposed sponsorship community" and dismissed the "interests of free speech on the Internet."

Supporters have maintained that approving the domain is in keeping with the principle of openness that has fueled the Internet's growth.

While the idea of ".xxx" has provoked a philosophical debate, for the U.S. company that submitted the application for the domain, the issue is little more than a matter of dollars and cents.

ICM Registry and its CEO, Stuart Lawley, who has led the fight for ICANN's approval of ".xxx," stand to profit handsomely from the rollout of ".xxx" websites—because he will be in charge of collecting fees for the use of the new domains.

Lawley plans to charge registrars $60 per year for the domain names. He estimates that he could sell as many as 500,000 by the time he rolls them out this summer.

"This was always going to be a very lucrative arrangement," he said in an interview Friday.

Lawley's prices have been a critical issue for opponents to his plan, since domain names typically sell for a fraction of what Lawley plans to charge. They often sell for $10 or less.

ICANN had repeatedly rejected Lawley's application since 2000, under pressure from Christian groups and governments unhappy with the spread of online porn. Lawley has pitched the suffix as a way for parents to more easily block access to the content. He argues it will be easier for Web filtering software to block ".xxx" sites since they are clearly labeled as porn.

Spain's police publish catalog of stolen art

MADRID (AP)—Spanish police have published a catalog of high value stolen art and precious objects in the hope of reuniting them with their rightful owners.

Among items retrieved during raids are works by Pablo Picasso, sculpture, rare archaeological objects, watches, coins and medals.

Six Picasso pieces from 1933 entitled "Cardinal Sins" including "Envy" and "Avarice"—each in a silver frame—feature alongside an Etruscan period bronze sculpture estimated by police to be 2,000 years old and jewelry made of gold, diamonds and emeralds.

Other items include Roman coins bearing the garlanded head of Emperor Lucius Septimius Severus and a 17th century tapestry depicting Battle of the Granicus, when Alexander the Great defeated the Persian Empire in 334 B.C.

Mottola hits the big time with the alien buddy film 'Paul'

By COLIN COVERT
STAR TRIBUNE (MINNEAPOLIS)

MINNEAPOLIS—Greg Mottola has come a long way in just a few years. He and his crew lost the first day of shooting on his debut feature, a two-week, $15,000 indie, because they couldn't locate the camera. On his most recent film, Universal Pictures' science-fiction buddy comedy "Paul," Mottola got to direct Steven Spielberg. That's progress.

Yet even on a $40 million production, the more things change, the more they stay the same. "You'd think a bigger movie would feel a lot different," Mottola said in a phone interview from his Manhattan home. "It's awfully shocking how similar, how disorganized and time-pressured it is. So guerrilla-style indie filmmaking is a pretty good starting place."

"Paul" blends action and comedy in the tale of a runaway alien (a computer-generated character voiced by Seth Rogen) befriended by two English tourists (co-screenwriters Simon Pegg and Nick Frost) visiting UFO-themed attractions in the Southwest.

Mottola takes the directorial reins held by Edgar Wright on the Pegg/Frost hits "Shaun of the Dead" and "Hot Fuzz." In place of Wright's whirligig visual energy, Mottola brings a knack for creating familiar, flawed, relatable but psychologically accurate characters. Paul, a fast-witted slacker savoring an RV road trip after decades of top-secret confinement, is a very down-to-Earth extraterrestrial.

"We wanted to push this away from slickness and toward the messiness of life, so we'll have something that feels more alive," said Mottola. His teen comedies "Superbad" (starring Michael Cera and Jonah Hill) and "Adventureland" (with Jesse Eisenberg and Kristen Stewart) boast emotional depth and a human dimension alongside abundant laughs.

Moving on to a madcap sci-fi comedy might seem like a radical change of trajectory, but Mottola disagrees. "I am interested in characters that are forced to have some kind of awakening. There's an element of that in the films I made before. This time it's sillier."

Frost and Pegg play archetypal comic-book aficionados exulting at their first pilgrimage to San Diego's annual Comic-Con extravaganza. The gala, with its costumed attendees and self-regarding minor celebrities, is skewered thoroughly but gently. Mottola, 47, who grew up on Spielberg and "Star Wars" in the 1970s, said he feels like enough of a geeky insider to affectionately mock zealous fantasy fans and nail the script's machine-gun paced movie references.

"The movie's designed so that if you don't get the references you don't feel left out, but if you do it adds an extra dimension," he said. There is an element in the film where Paul basically takes credit for all pop-culture references to aliens since 1947, when flying-saucer fans believe a UFO crashed into the New Mexico desert. Pegg and Frost, who are acting in Spielberg's upcoming film "Tintin," told him he'd be in for a ribbing, and he replied that he hoped there'd be a part for him in their movie. His bit part is one of the film's self-referential highlights.

"He actually seemed a little nervous because he hasn't done a ton of acting," Mottola said. "It was very sweet."

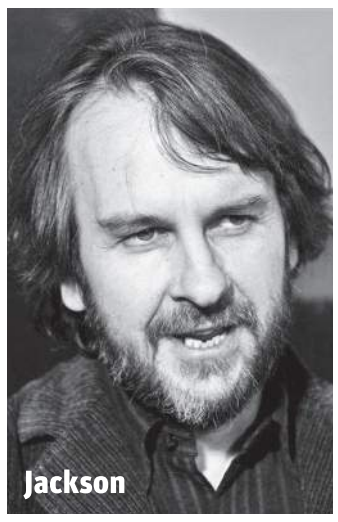
Cameras roll on 'The Hobbit' films in New Zealand

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—Cameras started rolling Monday on director Peter Jackson's production of "The Hobbit," following months of delays on the prequel to his Oscar-winning "Lord of the Rings" trilogy.

Hollywood studio funding problems, a threatened actors' boycott and ulcer surgery for Jackson have plagued pre-production on the $500 million, two-movie project.

The director posted a studio news release on his website Monday saying production has commenced in New Zealand on the much-anticipated project.

British actor Martin Freeman will star as hobbit Bilbo Baggins alongside Elijah Wood, Ian McKellen, Cate Blanchett and Orlando Bloom in twin movies of J.R.R. Tolkien's fantasy novel about a short, hairy-footed hero.


Jackson

The films are expected to take up to two years to make, with the first timed for release in late 2012.

"The Hobbit" is a prequel to "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy by Tolkien that Jackson helmed to blockbuster film success in 2001-03, winning best-picture and best-director Oscars for the finale.

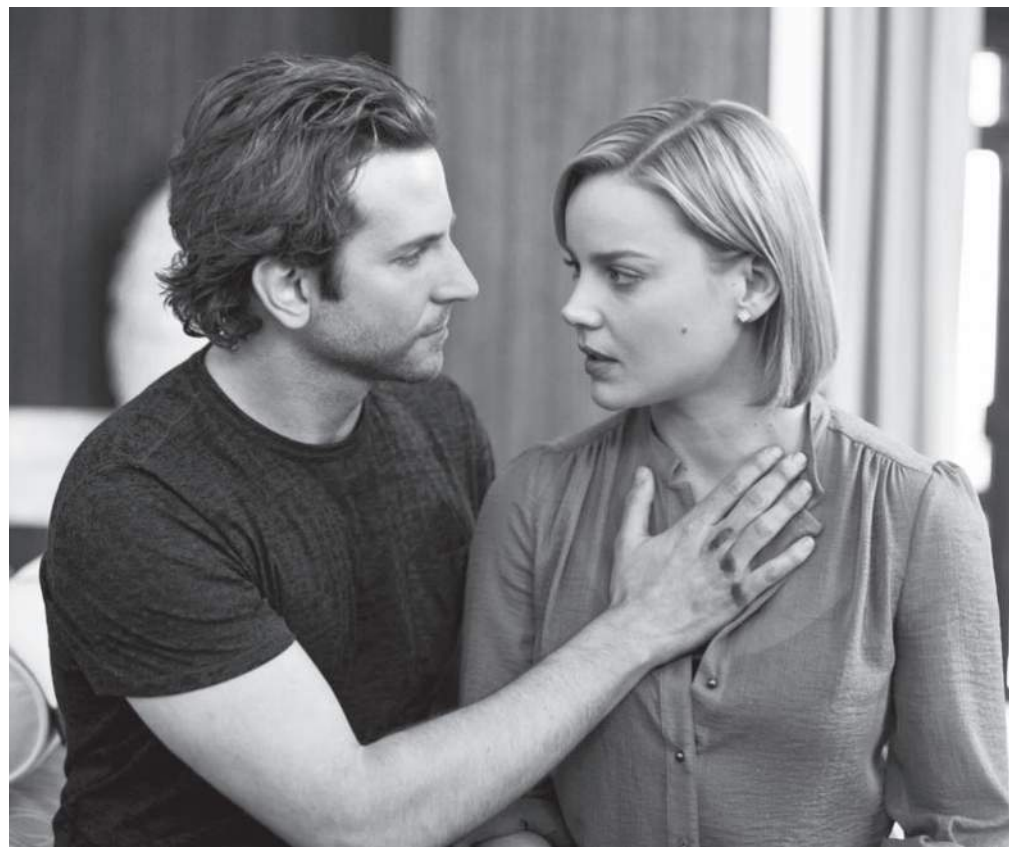
Jackson underwent surgery last month for a perforated stomach ulcer, pushing back the start of filming at least by several days.

Last October, New Zealand changed labor laws and tipped in extra tax breaks for Hollywood studios MGM and New Line Cinema to ensure the Hobbit films would be made in the country.

The changes mean actors and others working on the films will be hired as contractors not employees. The union had wanted local actors and other production workers to be hired as full-fledged employees on union contracts.

New Zealand received a huge boost to its tourism and film-making industries from "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy.

Freeman, whose films include "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy" and "Hot Fuzz" but who may be best known from Ricky Gervais' "The Office" television comedy, has said playing Baggins is the role of a lifetime.


AP

In this film publicity image released by Relativity Media, Bradley Cooper, left, and Abbie Cornish are shown in a scene from "Limitless."

'Limitless' tops box office with $19M

CHICAGO (AP)—There was no stopping "Limitless" at the box office.

The sci-fi thriller opened at No. 1 this weekend with $19 million, according to studio estimates Sunday.

The film from Relativity Media stars Bradley Cooper as a struggling writer who takes a magical pill that allows him to tap into his maximum brain potential. Suddenly he's cleaned up, making millions and wowing everyone he meets. Robert De Niro co-stars as a financial guru who's fascinated by him, with Abbie Cornish as Cooper's skeptical girlfriend.

"Limitless" broke out of a crowded pack of new releases and holdovers to take the top spot.

Last week's No. 1, the alien invasion movie "Battle: Los Angeles," fell to third place with $14.6 million. The Sony Pictures release has now made an estimated $60.6 million in two weeks. Coming in second was the animated Western "Rango," featuring the voice of Johnny Depp as a chameleon who's stuck in the desert. The Paramount film made $15.3 million for a three-week total of nearly $92.6 million.

1. **"Limitless,"** $19 million.
2. **"Rango,"** $15.3 million.
3. **"Battle: Los Angeles,"** $14.6 million.
4. **"The Lincoln Lawyer,"** $13.4 million.
5. **"Paul,"** $13.2 million
6. **"Red Riding Hood,"** $7.3 million.
7. **"The Adjustment Bureau,"** $5.9 million
8. **"Mars Needs Moms!"** $5.3 million.
9. **"Beastly,"** $3.3 million.
10. **"Hall Pass,"** $2.6 million.

It was a slow weekend, with the other new releases battling for the fourth and fifth spots. At No. 4 was the Lionsgate thriller "The Lincoln Lawyer" starring Matthew McConaughey as a sleazy defense attorney on a high-profile case. It made an estimated $13.4 million. In fifth place was "Paul," with Seth Rogen providing the voice of a pot-smoking, wisecracking alien who befriends a couple of British sci-fi geeks, played by Simon Pegg and Nick Frost (who also wrote the script). The Universal Pictures comedy made about $13.2 million.

Kyle Davies, Relativity's president of theatrical distribution, said he thinks "Limitless" stood out this weekend through a combination of its marketing message and good word of mouth.

"This was a thriller but a very different kind of thriller," he said. "It was a unique angle on a traditional genre."

Davies also pointed to Cooper's appeal as a factor in the film's success. "Limitless" allowed the star of "The Hangover" and "The A-Team" to show a more dramatic side.

"He's coming into his own as a leading man. I think he appeals to men and women," he said. "And De Niro is just awesome in this."

The simple tagline on the film's posters—"What if a pill could make you rich and powerful?"—went a long way in luring audiences, said Hollywood.com analyst Paul Dergarabedian: "The art of the tagline has sort of been lost and this brought it back."

And certainly the front-and-center presence of the blue-eyed Cooper, who's also an executive producer on the film, didn't hurt.

"He could be America's new leading man," Dergarabedian said. "He can do comedy, he can do action, he can do drama. Women love to look at him and guys want to have a beer with him. But he's no overnight star—he's been around for a while."

On the other end of the success spectrum is "Mars Needs Moms!" which came in eighth place this week with just $5.3 million. The 3-D animated adventure movie from Disney, about a little boy who follows his mom when aliens kidnap her and take her to Mars, cost an estimated $150 million to make. It's only grossed about $15.4 million in two weeks and has just 38 percent positive reviews on the Rotten Tomatoes website.

"It's inexplicable," Dergarabedian said. "Families need entertainment, so if a new family film comes out—whether it's `Rango' following `Gnomeo & Juliet' or `Mars Needs Moms!' following 'Rango,' you figure they're going to see it.

"I don't think people stayed away from `Mars Needs Moms!' because it's in 3-D," he added. "This is not a referendum on 3-D."

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Hollywood.com. Final figures will be released Monday.

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Paul
Friday 4:05 7:05 9:45
Saturday 1:05 4:05 7:05 9:45
Sunday 1:05 4:05 7:05
Mon thru Thurs 4:05 7:05
Simon Pegg, Nick Frost
Comedy • Rated R
Synopsis
Two British buddies (Shaun of the Dead/Hot Fuzz's Simon Pegg and Nick Frost) head out on the road in search of Area 51 after attending a comic convention, only to encounter a cute little alien named Paul along the way in this comedy from Working Title and Universal Pictures. Superbad's Greg Mottola directs from a script by Pegg and Frost.

Limitless
Friday 4:10 7:10 9:50
Saturday 1:10 4:10 7:10 9:50
Sunday 1:10 4:10 7:10
Mon thru Thurs 4:10 7:10
Bradley Cooper, Robert De Niro
Thriller, Science Fiction • Rated PG 13
Synopsis
The Illusionist's Neil Burger helms this adaptation of Alan Glynn's novel detailing what happens when a man stumbles upon a one-of-a-kind smart pill. Hairspray's Leslie Dixon provides the screenplay for the Universal production.

Battle: Los Angeles
Friday 4:30 7:30 9:55
Saturday 1:30 4:30 7:30 9:55
Sunday 1:30 4:30 7:30
Mon thru Thurs 4:30 7:30
Aaron Eckhart, Michelle Rodriguez
Science Fiction • Rated PG 13
Synopsis
A platoon of Marines take on an alien invasion throughout Los Angeles in this Original Films sci-fi action picture, headed by director Jonathan Liebesman (Texas Chainsaw Massacre: The Beginning) and producer Neal H. Moritz. The Dark Knight's Aaron Eckhart stars in the produciton.

Red Riding Hood
Friday 4:15 7:15 10:00
Saturday 1:15 4:15 7:15 10:00
Sunday 1:15 4:15 7:15
Mon thru Thurs 4:15 7:15
Amanda Sayfried, Gary Oldman
Horror • Rated PG 13

Mars Needs Moms
Friday 4:20 7:20 9:40
Saturday 1:20 4:20 7:20 9:40
Sunday 1:20 4:20 7:20
Mon thru Thurs 4:20 7:20
Seth Green, Joan Cusack
Science Fiction • Rated PG

Rango
Friday 4:00 7:00 9:30
Saturday 1:00 4:00 7:00 9:30
Sunday 1:00 4:00 7:00
Mon thru Thurs 4:00 7:00
Johnny Depp, Isla Fisher
Children's/Family • Rated G

I Am Number Four
Friday 4:25 7:25 9:35
Saturday 1:25 4:25 7:25 9:35
Sunday 1:25 4:25 7:25
Mon thru Thurs 4:25 7:25
Alex Pettyfer, Timothy Olyphant
Science Fiction • Rated PG 13

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Prince William visits flood-hit Australian towns

TOOWOOMBA, Australia (AP)—Prince William met with the family of a 13-year-old Australian boy who gave his life to save his younger brother during devastating floods earlier this year.

The second in line to the British throne closed out a visit to disaster zones in Australia and New Zealand with brief but poignant stops in small towns where flash flooding ripped houses from their foundations and carried away cars during the worst of a weekslong crisis.

Jordan Rice and his mother were among 35 people killed in the floods in the town of Toowoomba on Jan. 10. Trapped in the car as the water rose around the family, Jordan told rescuers who reached them to grab his brother, Blake, 11, first.

William chatted with Blake and his father, John Tyson, on Sunday at one of several functions where the prince mingled with survivors of the flooding that swamped a huge part of northeastern Queensland state starting late last year.

"He could feel our pain, you could see it in his eyes," Tyson said after meeting with the prince.

William's visit, which comes as anticipation builds around his wedding in late April to Kate Middleton, has been relatively low key out of respect for those affected by the disasters in the places he has toured, starting last week in the earthquake-struck city of Christchurch in New Zealand.

AP

Britain's Prince William meets people while attending a spirit of the country concert at Toowooba, Australia, Sunday, March 20, 2011.

The focus has been on the prince meeting survivors in informal gatherings and getting briefings from officials on recovery efforts, rather than speeches or large ceremonial appearances. William hasn't talked directly to the media during the visits.

Flown by military helicopter, William stopped in the town of Grantham, which was almost completely wiped away by flash flooding in January. He also visited Ipswich, a larger town that was one of many inundated by floodwaters.

William heard survival tales from residents who lived through the disaster, and attended functions that included many barbecues and a country music festival where he took to the stage and waved a cowboy hat in a gesture to the crowd.

Australia, a former British colony, is a constitutional monarchy with Queen Elizabeth II—William's grandmother—as head of state but is governed completely independently from Britain. While Australia has a strong movement backing full independence in the form of a republic, the queen and most of her heirs remain personally popular here.

Wyclef says bullet grazed hand in Haiti's capital

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—Musician Wyclef Jean said Sunday that a bullet grazed his hand as he stepped out of a car to make a telephone call, but said he was only slightly injured.

Jean, who has been in Haiti helping the presidential campaign of his friend and fellow musician Michel "Sweet Micky" Martelly, said the bullet grazed him late Saturday night as he stepped out of his car in the Delmas section of the capital, Port-au-Prince, to make a call on his cellphone.

"The way I can explain it is that the bullet grazed me in my right hand," Jean told The Associated Press in a telephone interview. "I heard blow, blow, blow, and I just looked at my hand."

Jean, who was with a driver and the Haitian hip-hop singer FanFan at the time, said he didn't know who fired the shots, or whether they were directed at him.

He said he got out of the car to have a private conversation that FanFan would not overhear. He heard the shots and looked down to see blood on his shirt and sneakers.

The Haitian-American performer said he was treated at a local hospital and released. Jean said he took antibiotics and recovered at an "undisclosed location" before going out to vote in Sunday's presidential election.

Jean did not say what hospital treated him. Later, Garry Andre, who handles security for the musician, said it was City Med, a private clinic, in Petionville. A pharmacist at the facility's entrance said she saw Jean pass through overnight and later leave.

Haitian police chief Mario Andresol told reporters that he wasn't sure what happened during the shooting and that Jean didn't talk to police.

"We can't tell you if he was injured by a bullet or something else," Andresol said. "He will have to answer to police no matter what."

Later, Jean was asked by reporters to comment on rumors that he had been injured by broken glass, not a bullet. "This is Haiti; it's a city of rumors," he said as he went to vote in the Delmas section of Port-au-Prince. "There's another one with me and Busta Rhymes in the car."

A new elastic bandage covered a portion of Jean's right hand, which he used to cast his ballot. Sitting in the back of a silver Toyota Prado SUV, he showed the AP his ink-stained thumb on his bandaged hand as evidence that he voted.

Jean, a native of Haiti who rocketed to fame as a member of the hip-hop trio The Fugees, came to Haiti to support Martelly, who faces university administrator and former first lady Mirlande Manigat.

Jenkins says 8th album returns to classical roots

HONG KONG (AP)—British singer Katherine Jenkins says her eighth album will mark a return to her classical roots, after collaborating with famed pop producer David Foster on her previous release.

Jenkins

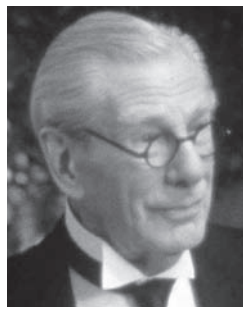
Jenkins told The Associated Press on the sidelines of her first solo Asian tour on Monday that the new release will feature a mix of classical, folk and musical numbers.

She said, "I don't like to always follow the obvious path. I like to change direction every now and again. And I feel like it's time to make a classical album."

Jenkins performed with the City Chamber Orchestra of Hong Kong on Sunday. Her next performances will be with the Bangkok Symphony Orchestra on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Batman's 'butler' Michael Gough dies at 94

LONDON (AP)—Michael Gough, the British actor best known for playing Bruce Wayne's butler Alfred in a series of Batman movies, died Thursday at age 94, his ex-wife said.



Gough

Gough appeared in more than 150 movies and television shows, including British science-fiction show "Doctor Who," and recently voiced characters in Tim Burton's "Alice in Wonderland" and "Corpse Bride." But he remains best remembered for his role as Alfred Pennyworth in the Batman franchise, opposite three different Batmans: Michael Keaton, Val Kilmer and George Clooney.

The veteran actor died at home in England, surrounded by family, his ex-wife Anneke Wills said through her agent.

Wills, who herself starred in the "Dr. Who," said in an obituary posted on its website: "As his body was deteriorating this week, he said that he wanted to hang on for St. Patrick's Day. And he did, just. In the end ... there is only love."

Gough starred in "Batman Returns," directed by Burton in 1992, and "Batman Forever" in 1995 and "Batman and Robin" in 1997, both by Joel Schumacher.

Wife's choice of dinner date is hard for man to swallow

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: My job requires me to travel out of town several nights a week, leaving my wife home alone. She recently invited a mutual (male) friend out for dinner during my absence. He's the other half of a couple we socialize with frequently. (His wife was also out of town.)

I told her I was uncomfortable with it. I don't think married men and women should go out alone with members of the opposite sex. She maintains that it wasn't a "date," that she was just having a meal with a friend.

I value your opinion and would like to know how you feel about this. Did I overreact? Is it appropriate for a married woman to go out for a meal alone with a man other than her husband?

FEELING CHEATED ON IN ILLINOIS

DEAR FEELING CHEATED ON: With some couples this wouldn't be an issue. However, how I feel about it is not as important as how YOU feel about it. If you have explained your feelings to your wife and she knows it made you uncomfortable—innocent as it was—then it shouldn't be repeated. I can't help but wonder how she would react if you told her you had run into the man's wife on one of your business trips and the two of you had had dinner together—and plan to do so again in the future.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Whenever my father comes into my room to wake me up, he opens the shutters on my windows. After spending hours in a dark room, the bright light hurts my eyes.

I have talked to him about it several times, but usually find myself apologizing for being overly sensitive about the matter.

Abby, even when he has promised not to, he still does it. Is there anything I can do to make him stop?

SENSITIVE EYES IN RICHMOND, VA.

DEAR SENSITIVE EYES: Yes, there is. Take responsibility for waking yourself up by getting an alarm clock so you no longer need your father's "help."

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My husband's sister is being married in a few months. The wedding is in her hometown, which is more than 1,400 miles from where we live. My husband and I have three small children.

Taking our entire family and staying for three or four days will cost almost $3,000. Two of the children would not be able to attend the ceremony without causing a disruption, due to naps, feeding, etc. In spite of the financial burden and the fact that it will be a difficult trip for the children, the bride-to-be is demanding that all of us be there.

Abby, are we obligated to make this trip, or would it be acceptable for only my husband to attend? If he goes alone, he will have time with his sister and the rest of the family, whom he does not get to see very often. We want to do the right thing, but the reality is that taking our family of five would be difficult and stressful for everyone.

ANXIOUS IN OHIO

DEAR ANXIOUS: Your husband needs to assert himself and talk some sense into his sister. While it is wonderful that she would like to have all of you at her wedding, an invitation is a request—not a summons. If being there with the children would be stressful financially, logistically and emotionally, you are right to stay home.

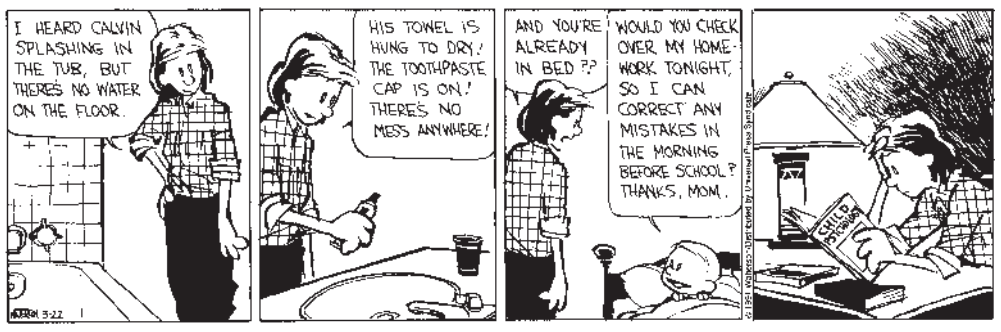
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


I HEARD CALVIN SPLASHING IN THE TUB, BUT THERE'S NO WATER ON THE FLOOR.
HIS TOWEL IS HUNG TO DRY, THE TOOTHPASTE CAP IS ON, THERE'S NO MESS ANYWHERE!
AND YOU'RE ALREADY IN BED??
WOULD YOU CHECK OVER MY HOMEWORK TONIGHT, SO I CAN CORRECT ANY MISTAKES IN THE MORNING BEFORE SCHOOL? THANKS, MOM.
CHILD PSYCHOLOGY

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

SO HAS BUSINESS BEEN ANY BETTER AT THE BOOKSTORE?
EHH, NOT REALLY. E-BOOKS ARE THE ONLY SEGMENT THAT'S GROWING.
E-BOOKS. HMM.
DOESN'T IT SEEM RUDE TO EXCLUDE THE OTHER LETTERS?
3-22

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

HOW WAS WORK?
TODAY WAS THE WORST DAY OF MY LIFE.
YOU SAY THAT EVERY DAY.
YEAH. WHAT MY LIFE LACKS IN QUALITY IT MAKES UP FOR IN CONSISTENCY.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

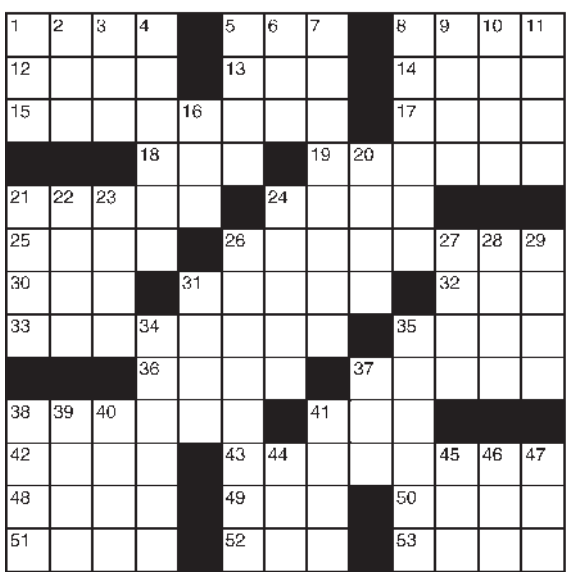
ACROSS
1 St. Louis team
5 Lingerie item
8 Tubular pasta
12 Concept
13 Chow down
14 Paradise
15 Historically significant symbol
17 Blueprint
18 Police officer
19 Yellow-brown colors
21 Bit part
24 Black plus white
25 Palette selections
26 Canadian city
30 Greek H
31 Trio of goddesses
32 Portion of N.A.
33 Kingdom
35 "Animal House" group
36 Taverns
37 Run off to wed
38 Tropical fruit
41 Past
42 Grand-scale tale
43 One-track transport
48 Birthright barterer
49 Prior night
50 Sorts
51 Umps
52 Spotted
53 "Monopoly" card

DOWN
1 Edge
2 Commotion
3 Chaps
4 Pasta toppings
5 Gridlock sound
6 Operated
7 Lawyer
8 Gentle breeze
9 Not working
10 Rip
11 Hostels
16 Cattle call
20 Eliot-based musical
21 Sci. course
22 Car
23 Intend
24 Barbarians
26 Knotted fringes
27 Franc replacement
28 Now, on a memo
29 Tardy
31 Unravel
34 Old calculator
35 Ornate, as prose
37 Id counterpart
38 Juror, in theory
39 Church section
40 Chanteuse Edith
41 From the beginning
44 Eggs
45 Hearty brew
46 Eisenhower
47 1960s hallucinogen

Solution time: 21 mins.

I	D	S		F	A	K	I	R		P	A	C
L	E	A		L	E	O	N	E		H	U	R
L	E	C	H	E	R	O	U	S		E	R	A
			R	F	O		S	C	A	R	A	B
P	A	C	E	R	S		E	U	R	O		
U	N	H		S	O	W		E	L	M	E	R
S	T	E	M		L	E	O		O	O	Z	E
S	E	R	I	F		B	U	R		N	R	A
		O	M	I	T		T	H	R	E	A	D
R	A	K	I	S	H		P	O	I			
A	G	E		H	E	R	O	D	O	T	U	S
C	U	E		E	R	A	S	E		O	R	E
Y	E	S		D	E	N	T	S		T	N	T

Yesterday's answer 2-22



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Reese Witherspoon, 35; Elvis Stojko, 39; Bob Costas, 59; William Shatner, 80

Happy Birthday: Your emphasis should be on relationships—both business and personal. Equality will make or break whatever connection you have to the people around you. This is the time to come up with new ideas and ways of doing things that will add to your efficiency and also allow you to grow creatively, financially and emotionally. Your numbers are 7, 10, 12, 21, 24, 36, 44

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Strength and courage will set you apart from the competition. Collaborating with someone who has something you need will put you in a different category than everyone you need to deal with professionally, personally and financially. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You'll be pulled in different directions when dealing with business and personal partners. Don't be too free with your opinions until you have heard what everyone else has to say. You may change your mind once you have had time to digest what's going on. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Rely on the connections you have made over the years to help you get what you want now. Don't be afraid to call in favors or to spend time and money in order to get ahead. How you display what you have to offer will make the difference. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Ulterior motives will be present. If you are too trusting, you are likely to be disappointed. Ask questions and refuse to commit to any agreement until all the details are clear. Change can be good but it has to be right for you. ✪✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): You cannot let emotional matters stand in the way of your success. Focus on what you need to know in order to get ahead and the changes you must make to stand out. Opportunity knocks and you have to jump in with both feet. ✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Make a conscious effort to take care of everyone's concerns, including your own. Being aggressive regarding a personal relationship will show your devotion. Arrange a trip that will ease your stress. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Personal matters will cause confusion. Focus on your career or money matters and how you can make your life better. Turn your back on anyone trying to sway you in a direction that doesn't suit you. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Take action. Now is a good time to throw yourself behind your dreams, hopes and wishes and to aggressively move forward with your creative plans for the future. Don't let uncertainty stand in the way. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Don't get talked into helping those who are lazy when you should be doing more to help make your own life better. Focus on home and family and what will make you a better person and your surroundings more conducive to what you want to accomplish. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Stick close to home. Problems while traveling or dealing with authority figures, institutions or government agencies will lead to setbacks. Now is not the time to put pressure on others. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Don't let love be your demise. If something isn't working, do something about it. There is nothing that cannot be fixed if you approach it the right way. Fairness and honesty are all that's required. ✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Dig out old contracts and you will discover a way to improve your position through negotiation. There is plenty of room for advancement. It never hurts to ask for what you want as long as you are willing to give back and compromise. ✪✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are strong and independent. You have a positive outlook and you stand up for your beliefs and rights.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		5	9		7	2		
	3						6	
7		2				3		5
2				8				9
			7	2	5			
1				4				6
4		1				7		8
	7						3	
		9	8		1	4		

Difficulty Level ★★ 3/22

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

6	4	1	7	2	5	8	9	3
7	3	2	8	9	1	4	5	6
9	8	5	4	6	3	2	1	7
3	6	4	1	5	9	7	2	8
5	9	8	2	3	7	6	4	1
1	2	7	6	8	4	5	3	9
4	1	3	5	7	6	9	8	2
8	7	9	3	4	2	1	6	5
2	5	6	9	1	8	3	7	4

Difficulty Level ★ 3/21

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

COLIN FIRTH **Solution: 9 letters**

A	M	A	M	M	A	M	I	A	H	E	V	O	L	V
E	M	L	Y	R	T	T	E	N	N	E	B	A	I	E
D	A	U	S	D	F	S	A	M	T	S	I	R	H	C
I	I	C	A	A	A	M	C	E	P	D	T	E	C	I
R	T	A	E	R	B	I	R	I	N	U	E	T	T	D
P	E	A	R	C	T	A	R	I	E	M	E	A	I	U
L	P	T	L	Y	N	I	E	J	S	A	R	E	P	J
A	O	A	S	Y	T	V	K	N	O	I	T	H	R	E
Y	P	N	C	E	I	G	A	I	G	N	S	T	E	R
M	A	H	D	T	H	M	O	L	N	L	E	I	V	P
A	T	G	A	O	U	C	C	L	M	G	I	S	E	K
K	I	L	Y	N	N	A	N	P	D	O	(T)	S	F	L
E	E	O	E	Q	U	A	L	I	H	E	N	(S)	H	A
R	N	B	O	R	N	R	R	L	W	E	N	T	(A)	H
E	T	E	I	T	A	B	U	S	Y	D	E	M	O	(C)

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Actually, Bafta, Batie, Bennet, Born, Bridget, Busy, Cast, Chalk, Christmas, City, Comedy, Diary, Easy, English, Equal, Fever Pitch, Globe, Golden, India, Italy, Jones, King, London, Love, Luca, Main, Mamma Mia, McPhee, Mr. Darcy, Nanny, Patient, Playmaker, Prejudice, Pride, Relative, Spirit, Street, Theater, Trauma, Valmont, Veteran, Virtue, Winchester

Yesterday's Answer: Activist

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WHATZIT Solution:
Desperate measures

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Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:
- All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

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All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

Burger & Comer, P.C.

Job Title: Full Time Accountant and Auditor

Opening Date: March 15, 2011
Closing Date: March 29, 2011

Salary Range: $7.50 to $20.00 Hourly

Job Duties: Examine, analyze and interpret accounting records for the purpose of giving advice or preparing income statement, cash flow, balance sheet. Prepare financial statements audit report, an attestation report of internal controls over financial reporting, or other agreed-upon external audit report. Prepare CNMI, Guam and Various US States individual & corporate income tax and other compliance taxes.

Qualification Requirements: College Graduate-Major in Accounting; Preferably CPA and 3 years of experience as an accountant/auditor, knowledge of CNMI, Guam and US Federal Taxes, knowledge of Generally Accepted Accounting Principle and Generally Accepted Auditing Standards.

Comments: Workmen Compensation and Medical provided

For interested applicant please send your resume' to burger@pticom.com or fax to 235-6905

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
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Closing Date: Thursday, 03/24/11

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1 DESPERATE 5

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Find today's solution in this section

VCU wins 3rd game, routs Purdue, 94-76

CHICAGO (AP)—The question is no longer whether Virginia Commonwealth belongs. Instead, it's: Who can stop the Rams?

Bradford Burgess scored 23 points and 11th-seeded VCU made it three victories in five days Sunday night, routing third-seeded Purdue 94-76 to earn a trip to the Southwest regional semifinals.

VCU's remarkable run sends the Rams to the round of 16 for the first time in school history.

With their fans chanting "VCU, VCU" as the final seconds ticked off the clock, they've now ousted Southern Cal, Georgetown and Purdue since Wednesday night.

Deep, fast and talented, VCU (26-11) will play Florida State on Friday in San Antonio in the first NCAA tournament game matching a No. 10 seed against a No. 11 seed, according to STATS LLC.

Jamie Skeen added 13 points in a balanced scoring attack as the Rams led by as many 20, shutting down the Boilermakers (26-8) and, for most of the night, quieting a large contingent of Purdue fans at the United Center.

Speedy floor leader Joey Rodriguez scored 12 points and had 11 assists, controlling the tempo.

VCU shot 57 percent and had 26 assists to just four turnovers.

Big Ten Player of the Year JaJuan Johnson scored 25 in his final game for the Boilermakers to go with 14 rebounds. But Purdue's other star, E'Twaun Moore, struggled and managed just 10 points on 5-of-15 shooting

Ryne Smith had 20 points for Purdue, hitting 6-of-8 on 3-pointers.

VCU led by 10 at the half. Freshman Juvonte Reddic added 12 points, six early in the second half when the speedy Rams foiled a comeback by the Boilermakers by consistently getting open for short shots inside.

And after a timeout and a Boilermakers miss, Rodriguez didn't hesitate from way beyond the top of the key, sinking an NBA-length 3-pointer and putting the Rams up 59-44. VCU hit seven of its first eight shots in the second half to keep up what it started in the first.

When Burgess drove for a layup and then got open and sank a 3-pointer, he put the Rams ahead by 19 with just more than 11 minutes left.

The Rams shot 50 percent in the first half, had a 13-0 run, were up by as many as 13 and held on for a 42-32 cushion at intermission behind 10 points each from Burgess and Brandon Rozzell.

Playing at a frenetic pace, the Rams didn't look like a team playing their third game in five nights, proving early that their quickness, tenacity and deep bench would pose problems for the Boilermakers. Moving the ball to the open man, they let the shifty Rodriguez direct play on the floor with his dribble.

Moments after the Boilermakers' Lewis Jackson had his layup attempt blocked by Burgess, bringing the crowd to its feet, Rozzell hit another 3-pointer, pushing the lead to nine.

VCU had knocked off Southern Cal in Dayton on Wednesday night, arrived in Chicago during the wee hours Thursday and then blew out Georgetown on Friday.

Smith, who took an elbow to the head and missed two practices last week, found the range early, sinking his first four shots—three of them 3-pointers—in the first seven minutes. He had 11 points early and nearly doubled his average of 5.8. He finished the half with 14 points, keeping Purdue from being run out of the United Center even earlier.

AP

Virginia Commonwealth forward Jamie Skeen (21) looks for a shot against Purdue's Ryne Smith (25) and fJaJuan Johnson (25) in the first half of a third-round NCAA Southwest regional tournament college basketball game in Chicago, Sunday, March 20, 2011.

Arizona 70, Texas 69

At Tulsa, OK, Derrick Williams' three-point play with 9.6 seconds remaining lifted Arizona to a 70-69 win over Texas in the third round of the NCAA tournament.

The fifth-seeded Wildcats (29-7) led by as many as 13 in the first half and were up for most of the game before J'Covan Brown's jumper put the No. 4 seed Longhorns ahead 69-67. Williams misfired on a tying attempt with 14.5 seconds remaining, but Texas (28-8) was called for a five-second violation on the inbounds play to give Arizona one more chance.

Replays appeared to show the call came before the count reached five—as a Texas player tried to call timeout.

Williams took advantage, slipping to the baseline on a pick-and-roll and taking the pass from Kyle Fogg. His shot banked in to tie the game, and his free throw put the Wildcats into the regional semifinals in their return to the NCAA tournament. Last year's absence snapped a 25-year streak.

Arizona will play top-seeded Duke on Thursday in Anaheim, Calif.

Brown had one final chance for the Longhorns, driving the length of the court and into the lane. But he was met by a trio of Arizona defenders, including Williams, and his wild shot went high and missed. Time expired during the battle for the rebound.

Duke 73, Michigan 71

At Charlotte, NC, Nolan Smith scored 24 points and Duke held off a late rally to beat Michigan and give coach Mike Krzyzewski his 900th career victory.

Kyle Singler added 13 points for the Blue Devils (32-4), who shot 51 percent, never trailed in the second half and advanced to the round of 16 for the 12th time in 14 years.

Darius Morris scored 16 points to lead the eighth-seeded Wolverines (21-14), who trailed by 15 with 10:51 to play but clawed within one point twice in the final 90 seconds. They had one last chance after Smith missed a free throw with 8.7 seconds left.

Morris' runner in the lane with 2 seconds left bounced off the back iron and Smith grabbed the rebound at the buzzer, sealing Duke's trip to Anaheim for the West regional semifinals.

Kyrie Irving and Ryan Kelly scored 11 points apiece for the defending national champions, who won their eighth straight game in the NCAA tournament.

Krzyzewski improved to 900-283 in his 36th season, and can catch his mentor and college coach, Bob Knight, for first on the career list next weekend.

North Carolina 86, Washington 83

At Charlotte, NC, Tyler Zeller scored 23 points, Harrison Barnes added 22 and North Carolina survived a frantic finish to beat Washington and advance to the second weekend of the NCAA tournament for a record 24th time.

Rallying from deficits of 11 points in the first half and five in the second, the second-seeded Tar Heels (28-7) went ahead for good on Barnes' 3-pointer with 4:06 left.

But they needed two free throws from Dexter Strickland and a defensive stop in the closing seconds to advance.

Terrence Ross scored 19 points for the seventh-seeded Huskies (24-11), who overcame a hostile crowd to nearly pull the upset in a fast-paced game full of entertaining plays and mental miscues down the stretch.

Marquette 66, Syracuse 62

At Cleveland, Darius Johnson-Odom's 3-pointer with 27 seconds left snapped a tie and gave Marquette a win over Big East foe Syracuse that put the Golden Eagles into the round of 16 for the first time in eight years.

The 11th-seeded Golden Eagles (22-14) had the winning basket set up by one of Syracuse's 18 turnovers. Marquette will play North Carolina in the East regional semifinals Friday in Newark, N.J.

The Golden Eagles are in the round of 16 for the first time since Dwyane Wade led them to the Final Four in 2003.

This was the second straight early exit for third-seeded Syracuse (27-8). The Orange were a No. 1 seed last year and lost in the round of 16 to Butler.

Ohio State 98, George Mason 66

At Cleveland, David Lighty made all seven of his 3-pointers and scored 25 points, Jared Sullinger added 18 after informing one of George Mason's players "it's over" and top-seeded Ohio State made 16 3s to advance in the NCAA tournament with a jaw-dropping rout.

With thousands of fans chanting "O-H-I-O" at every opportunity, the Buckeyes (34-2) took apart the eighth-seeded Patriots (27-7), who created some March mayhem a few years ago and hoped to follow Butler's lead by taking out a No. 1 seed in this tourney.

Ohio State destroyed any upset plans and moved closer to its first national title since 1960. The Buckeyes will meet Kentucky (27-8) in the East regional semifinals Friday in Newark. Ohio State is 5-0 in NCAA tournament matchups with the Wildcats.

After falling behind 11-2, the Big Ten champions used their devastating inside-outside attack to post the most lopsided tournament victory in school history.

William Buford scored 18 and freshman guard Aaron Craft had 15 assists for Ohio State.

Cam Long scored 16 points to lead George Mason, which played without Luke Hancock, one of its best players. The sophomore guard had food poisoning and remained with a trainer at the team's hotel.

Kansas 73, Illinois 59

At Tulsa, OK, twin brothers Marcus and Markieff Morris combined for 41 points and 24 rebounds, powering top-seeded Kansas past Illinois to ensure the Jayhawks wouldn't make an opening-weekend exit from the NCAA tournament for the second straight year.

The Jayhawks (34-2) avoided revisiting their loss to another No. 9 seed, Northern Iowa, exactly a year earlier and also on Oklahoma soil. Instead, they're moving on in a bracket filled with upsets.

No. 11 seed VCU and 12th-seeded Richmond will join them in the Southwest regional semifinals in San Antonio. Kansas plays Richmond on Friday.

Mike Davis led the Fighting Illini (20-14) with 17 points and seven rebounds.

Florida State 71, Notre Dame 57

At Chicago, Bernard James scored 14 points, Michael Snaer added 13 and Florida State showed there's more to its game than defense with a dominant upset of second-seeded Notre Dame that put the Seminoles in the round of 16 for the first time since 1993.

It was an impressive effort by the 10th-seeded Seminoles, who had four players in double figures and went 9 of 19 from 3-point range.

Florida State (23-10) now faces upstart Virginia Commonwealth in the Southwest regional semifinals Friday in San Antonio. According to STATS LLC, it will be the first 10 vs. 11 matchup in NCAA tournament history.

For Notre Dame, meanwhile, it was another disappointing showing in the NCAAs. The Fighting Irish (27-7) had their highest seed since 1981 under Digger Phelps, but they've reached the regional semifinals only once in the last 24 years (2003).

Big East player of the year Ben Hansbrough was stifled most of the night by the Seminoles' defense, scoring 18 points on 5-of-13 shooting before fouling out with 3:19 left.

Bonds trial scheduled to start Monday morning

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—The Barry Bonds perjury trial is finally scheduled to get under way, more than three years after baseball's all-time home run leader was charged with lying to a federal grand jury when he denied knowingly taking performance-enhancing drugs.

The trial will start Monday morning when Bonds' lawyers, prosecutors and the judge begin the task of picking 12 jurors and four alternates. One hundred prospective jurors filled out lengthy questionnaires Thursday asking them their opinion of Bonds, how many baseball games they have attended and dozens of other question designed to root bias among the jurors.

Bonds, who hit a record-breaking 762 home runs in a 21-year major league career, was ordered to testify in December 2003 before a grand jury investigating a major sports doping ring centered at the Bay Area Laboratory Co-Operative in Burlingame, Calif.

Investigators found documents and other evidence connecting Bonds' to the lab, best known as BALCO, after raids there and at the home of Bonds' personal trainer Greg Anderson.

Nearly four years after Bonds told the jury that he never knowingly took steroids—and no one other than his doctor ever injected him with any substances—he was charged with perjury and obstruction of justice.

He was originally scheduled for trial in 2009. But the case was postponed until Monday because prosecutors' appealed the judge's barring the jury from seeing most of the evidence connected to Anderson, who has refused to testify. Prosecutors lost their appeal.

Anderson has been ordered to court Tuesday morning and is expected to be jailed on contempt of court charge until the end of trial. The trial is expected to last more than two weeks.

Bryant leads Lakers past Trail Blazers

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Kobe Bryant scored 10 of his 22 points in the fourth quarter as the Los Angeles Lakers rallied to beat the Portland Trail Blazers 84-80 in the NBA on Sunday for their 12th win in 13 games.

Derek Fisher made back-to-back steals to put the Lakers ahead in the final three minutes before hitting a clinching jumper with 10 seconds left.

The Lakers played without starting center Andrew Bynum, who was suspended for two games on Sunday for his flagrant foul on Minnesota's Michael Beasley two days earlier.

Nicolas Batum scored 22 of his 25 points in the first three quarters for the Blazers, whose three-game winning streak was stopped. Portland scored just 14 points in the fourth quarter on 5-for-18 shooting.

Rockets 110, Jazz 108

In Houston, Kyle Lowry had 28 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists for Houston's first triple-double of the season as the Rockets beat Utah.

With the win, Houston moved past Utah into ninth place in the Western Conference standings and is now within 1 1/2 games of idle Memphis in the race for the eighth and final playoff spot.

Lowry got his first career triple-double and set a career high in rebounds, and Kevin Martin scored 34 points for the Rockets.

Paul Millsap, back after missing five games with left knee tendinitis, scored 35 points for the Jazz, who have dropped seven of their last nine road games. Al Jefferson added 17 points and 19 rebounds.

Raptors 95, Thunder 93

In Oklahoma City, Amir Johnson made a layup with 1.4 seconds remaining to help Toronto stop a 14-game road losing streak.

Andrea Bargnani scored 23 points for the Raptors, who earned their first road win since Jan. 5 at Cleveland.

Oklahoma City, which entered the game with a six-game winning streak, overcame a 10-point deficit at the end of the third to take a 93-90 lead with 1:31 left.

But Leandro Barbosa made a tying 3-pointer with 38.5 seconds left before Johnson won the game with his layup.

James Harden scored 23 points for the Thunder.

Bucks 100, Knicks 95

In Milwaukee, Carlos Delfino scored a career-high 30 points and Brandon Jennings finished an assist short of a triple-double as Milwaukee defeated New York.

Jennings had 14 points, 11 rebounds and nine assists, and the Bucks built a 23-point first-quarter lead only to watch it evaporate by the fourth quarter.

Milwaukee is tied with Charlotte for ninth place in the Eastern Conference, 1 1/2 games behind Indiana for the final spot in the playoffs.

Carmelo Anthony had 23 points for the struggling Knicks, who have lost five of their last six. The Knicks are just 7-8 since acquiring Anthony in a trade last month.

AP

Los Angeles Lakers guard Kobe Bryant (24) gets by Portland Trail Blazers forward LaMarcus Aldridge (12) as he drives to the basket in the second half of an NBA basketball game, Sunday, March 20, 2011, in Los Angeles.

Suns 108, Clippers 99

In Los Angeles, Steve Nash had 23 points, 13 assists and seven rebounds as Phoenix topped the Los Angeles Clippers.

Channing Frye added 19 points in his second game back after dislocating his right shoulder, including two 3-pointers in the final minutes.

Blake Griffin scored 17 points for the Clippers, who have lost three of four. Chris Kaman had 21 points and 11 rebounds while starting for DeAndre Jordan, who sat out with pneumonia.

Mavericks 101, Warriors 73

In Dallas, Dirk Nowitzki scored 20 points and Peja Stojakovic added 17 to lead Dallas over Golden State.

Stojakovic returned from a six-game absence due to a stiff neck and went 5 for 8 from 3-point range.

Rodrigue Beaubois had 15 points and Tyson Chandler grabbed 17 rebounds for the Mavericks, who had lost four of six.

Monta Ellis had 18 points for the Warriors, who have lost four straight.

Hawks 104, Pistons 96

At Atlanta, Al Horford scored 18 points and Josh Smith and Joe Johnson each added 17 as Atlanta stopped a two-game slide.

Smith made a left-handed runner over Austin Daye with 52.1 seconds left, beating the shot-clock buzzer and giving the Hawks a 100-95 lead.

Rodney Stuckey led the Pistons with 22 points, but missed two jump shots in the final 1:14 as Detroit fell short.

Chris Wilcox added 18 and Greg Monroe scored 17 for Detroit, which has lost seven straight on the road.

Kings 127, Timberwolves 95

In Minneapolis, Samuel Dalembert had 26 points and 17 rebounds and Marcus Thornton added 23 points to lead Sacramento.

Sacramento rookie DeMarcus Cousins was ejected in the third quarter after shoving Martell Webster, but the Kings went on a 21-0 run without him.

The Kings picked up their 17th win of the season, equaling the Wolves with the fewest in the West.

Luke Ridnour scored 22 points for the Wolves, who played most of the game without star Kevin Love. He left in the second quarter with an injured left groin and finished with three rebounds and no points.

Wizards 98, Nets 92

In Washington, John Wall scored 26 points and Washington overcame a 17-point deficit to get the win.

After New Jersey's Kris Humphries scored five straight points to even the score at 90 with 1:44 left, Wall hit a jumper with 1:22 left and another with 46.5 remaining to give the Wizards a 94-90 lead.

Jordan Crawford added 21 points for the Wizards, who ended a six-game losing streak.

Brook Lopez had 21 points and 10 rebounds for the Nets, who have lost three straight. Humphries had 18 points and 17 rebounds.

Woodland comes up clutch to win at Innisbrook

Transitions Championship

PALM HARBOR, Fla. (AP)—Gary Woodland, a pure athlete who only started serious golf competition eight years ago, figured out quickly that hitting the ball from here to the moon was not going to help him win tournaments.

Perhaps it was only fitting that his biggest shot Sunday at the Transitions Championship came with his putter.

The race to the finish at Innisbrook was so wild that Woodland didn't make a single par on the back nine until the last hole. He made a 10-foot par putt that proved to be the difference in a one-shot victory over Webb Simpson.

"I can't come out here and hit the golf ball 900 yards and win," said Woodland, exaggerating only slightly. "I was very conservative this week, laid back almost all day—all four days—and just tried to get the ball in the fairway, get it on the green and let the putter do the work. That's what I'm learning."

The final par—his only par on a back nine that featured five birdies and three bogeys—gave Woodland a 4-under 67 and his first trip to Augusta National for the Masters.

Simpson also flew long on the 18th green and faced the same scary shot as Woodland in the group ahead. He off the back of the green, chipped 20 feet by the hole and the par putt was the only bad stroke he made all day. The bogey gave him a 69 and a runner-up finish in an otherwise solid performance for his first time in serious contention.

"I just didn't hit a very good second shot," Simpson said.

Woodland took only 23 putts in the final round—10 on the back nine. According to the Shotlink data, he didn't miss a single putt inside 20 feet in the final round, with four of those 17 putts outside 10 feet.

Woodland, who played college basketball at Washburn until deciding to transfer to Kansas to play golf, became the first player to earn his inaugural PGA Tour title at Innisbrook.

The win gives Woodland an invitation to Augusta National, where his awesome power and soft putting touch could make for an interesting marriage at the Masters. A late-bloomer, Woodland missed the second half of his rookie season two years ago with shoulder surgery, but began to show his potential when he lost in a playoff at the Bob Hope Classic.

Woodland finished at 15-under 269 and earned $990,000, moving up to No. 3 in the FedEx Cup standings.

"One thing that helped me was putting, and today it saved me," Woodland said. "Luckily, it won me a golf tournament."

Scott Stallings, a PGA Tour rookie who missed every cut on the West Coast Swing to fall to the bottom of the status ladder, kept his poise and stayed in the game until the 16th, the toughest driving hole on the Copperhead course with trees to the left and water to the right. Stallings went right into the lake and made double bogey.

Even so, he shot a 70 and finished alone in third, which gets him in the Houston Open in two weeks.

"A sponsor exemption changed my year, and I can't thank Transitions enough," Stallings said. "Without them giving me an opportunity to play, there's no way I would have been here. One good tournament completely changed my year."

Brandt Snedeker finished fourth.

Justin Rose, a two-time winner last year who started the final round with a one-shot lead, was tied for the lead until making four straight bogeys through the 10th hole to fall out of contention. He wound up five shots behind.

Nick Watney, coming off a World Golf Championship title at Doral last week, played with Woodland and fell out of the mix quickly by failing to make putts. Watney didn't make a birdie and closed with a 72 and tied for 13th, the first time Watney has been out of the top 10 all year. That means his two-month bet with caddie Chad Reynolds is over, and both can now get a hair cut.

Martin Kaymer, the world No. 1, closed with a 69 to tie for 20th.

Woodland played conservatively around the Copperhead course, usually hitting 2-iron off the tee. He hit one shot 337 yards uphill on one of the few holes he used driver, leading to a birdie.

Another driver didn't work out so well. He came out of his swing on the par-5 11th, and the ball went over and through the trees before settling in light rough between the tee and green on the 17th. He could only pitch a wedge to the 17th tee, and he had to scramble for bogey. Woodland followed with three straight birdies, the last one a 12-footer from the fringe on the 14th to take the lead.

Then came a flubbed chip on the 15th, and a bad bunker shot on the 16th, two bogeys to fall one shot behind. Woodland came up with another clutch putt on the 17th for birdie from 15 feet, setting up the biggest putt of them all.

Woodland was No. 153 in the world ranking, making him the ninth PGA Tour winner to be ranked 100th or lower.

He becomes the latest pure athlete to make an impression on the PGA Tour, cut out of the mold of Dustin Johnson. The difference is that Woodland still lacks polish. His only national competition was as a shortstop in baseball and a point guard in basketball. He originally turned down a golf scholarship at Kansas to play basketball at Division II Washburn.

In his first game, he scored three points in Allen Fieldhouse against the Jayhawks, and figured he better try golf.

Midway through his first year on tour in 2009, he had shoulder surgery, which turned out to be the best thing for him.

"I was athletic, but I didn't know what I was doing out here," he said. "I got hurt, and I had to step back and really figure out how to p

Snipers, Team Sang, Dosukebe Boys, Aschooschoo in the lead

By WALTER CEPEDA-SUTHERLAND
walter_sutherland@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Sniper Destroyers, Team Sang, Dosukebe Boys, and Ascooschoo are the current frontrunners in their respective divisions after last week's matchups in the Saipan Electronic Dart Association.

Oleai Beach Bar & Grill's Snipers Destroyers defeated Buddies' Bar & Grill's Black Stallions, 11-6, at home in the Masters division last Wednesday.

Its 49-19 record places the team in front of the Stallions (43-25) and D'Pirates M-Destroyers (32-36) among the seven-team division. Notably, the Snipers Destroyers currently have three players among the Top 10 in individual statistics.

D'Pirates Bar & Grill's Team Sang, meanwhile, defeated Gaia Bar's Gaiana C, 11-4, on the road last Wednesday in the C-Chichirika division.

Team Sang holds a 52-23 card with Buddies' Chagi Fan (49-26) and D'Pirates Lucky Shot (40-35) hot on its tail in the six-team division. Notably, Team Sang's Ray Indalecio, Jun Manaloto, and Jun Amirez are ranked first, second, and fourth in the individual statistics with weighted averages of 50.16, 46.63 and 42.60, respectively; D'Pirates Lucky Shot's Damien Spis is ranked third with a 43.07 weighted average.

In the C-Kingfisher division, Jonny's Bar & Grill's Dosukebe Boys blew out USSP Peleliu Club's Slow Hand, 13-2, at home last Wednesday.

It has a 56-19 record and aside from IT&E Anies Imuza (40-35), Dosukebe is 20 games ahead of the other four teams in the field.

D'Pirates' Bar & Grill's Aschooschoo, for its part, defeated the Nasty Girls, 12-3, on the road at Gaia Bar last Monday in the Ladies League.

At 45-15, Aschooschoo is still clinging to first place over Jonny's Yakau (44-16) with the other four teams in the division at least 14 games out.

Notably, Aschooschoo's Rufina Guevarra, Matrina Lisua, and Laniyo are ranked in the Top 3 of the individual statistics with weighted averages of 47.42, 44.86, and 44.03, respectively.

WASLE

From Page 28

man, Wasle was only ahead by 1:37 over Bucher, who timed in at 3:08:10 in XTERRA and 3:32:13 in Tagaman.

The Swiss ended up in second place in the PIC Double with a total time of 6:40:23, while Snyder placed third with her 6:40:53. Saipan's Mieko Carey came in at fourth, posting a faster time in Tagaman at 3:27:30 against her 3:30:37 in XTERRA. United Kingdom's Daz Parker placed fifth, submitting 3:32:41 in Tagaman and 3:38:33 in XTERRA for a combined time of 7:11:04.

Wasle said winning the PIC Double and placing in the Top 3 in both XTERRA and Tagaman proved that her Saipan trip was worth it.

"I really had a good time here. The courses were challenging but I survived with no major crashes. Racing in rain was hard because you're prone to accidents, but at the same time it's better than racing under a very hot weather. Overall, I had fun here and definitely, I will be back next year," the Kundl, Austria native said.

The diminutive triathlete, who stands less than five feet and weights about 80 lbs, fooled her competitors and even spectators, as despite her small physique, she showed tremendous power, especially in the run splits of the two events.

The cross country skiing and mountain running expert timed in at 1:02:30 in the 15-kilometer run in Tagaman, the fastest among female competitors and fifth best overall. In XTERRA, she logged 55:43, the fastest among 53 finishers and she was the lone entry to complete the 12-km trail race under the one-hour mark.

In the bike splits, she fared well with her 1:51:26 (16th best) in Tagaman's 60-km race and 1:46:20 (fourth best overall/second in women's) in XTERRA's 30K. In her Waterloo, the swim leg, Wasle had decent times 32:56 (Tagaman/25th best) and 23:02 (XTERRA/10th best).

In the men's division, as expected Gardner won for his second PIC Double title. Gardner clocked in at 2:53:46 in XTERRA to become the lone competitor to finish the race under three hours and then submitted 3:05:43 in Tagaman, surviving several tough Korean foes.

Both Gardner and Wasle won $500, roundtrip tickets for next year's Saipan Sportsfest, and a seven-night accommodation from PIC.

SETTSU-SAIPAN

From Page 28

BANMI said in a press release.

Settsu will be fielding two teams in the three-day tournament that will take place at the Marianas High School Gymnasium. The visitors will be fielding one team each in the girls and boys U18 divisions.

The Red Impulse has seven players on its boys U18 squad, including Hisataka Sakaguchi, Yutaro Nakamura, Tatsumi Yamashita, Hisataka Suda, Daiki Ito, and Hiroaki Dei. Yohishiro Kinoshita and Toshiya Kuhohara are the coach and assistant coach, respectively, while Susumu Sakaguchi is the team's supervisor.

Settu's girls U18 team has a 14-player roster led by returnee Akane Meda. Also on the team are Haruna Oshima, Aoi Miyaura, Reika Yamasaki, Mizuki and Siene Iwasake, Kimi Oida, Juria Iwamoto, Aika Ueshima, Nanami and Riho Hashimoto, Maki Maeike, Arisa Hashimoto, and Tsugumi Naoka. They will be pitted against the MISO All-Stars, MHS Lady Dolphins, and COPSSA All-Stars. The Lady Dolphins won the 2010-2011 edition of the MISO girls caging.

In the boys division, the Red Impulse will play against the MISO All-Stars, COPSSA All-Stars, and defending MISO boys champion Kagman High School.

Each team will compete in round-robin pool play, starting this Sunday and the all four teams per division will advance to the single-elimination playoffs.

The semifinals will be played on Monday with the No. 2 team meeting the No. 4 squad for the first finals seat and the No. 1 and 3 teams dueling for the second finals berth. The girls championship game is set for 7:30pm next Tuesday, while the boys U18 finale is scheduled for 6pm. Consolation games will be played at 3pm and 4:30pm.

The visitors are expected to arrive on Friday and the following day, BANMI, through development coach Elias Rangamar, will hold a players clinic from 10am to 12pm at the MHS gym. Then in the afternoon, BANMI and the tournament sponsors will host a pre-tournament barbecue dinner for the visitors at the Chalan Kanoa Beach Club from 5:30pm to 9pm.

Relief aid to Japan

Meanwhile, BANMI will charge admission fees at the games with all proceeds to be donated to earthquake and tsunami-torn Japan.

Entrance fees for students with ID are $0.25 and $0.50 for those without, while adults must pay $1. Additional monetary donation will also be accepted at the entrance.

This year's Settsu-Saipan caging is supported by DFS Saipan Galleria and Coca-Cola/Foremost.

ARAGO

From Page 28

cord and have yet to drop a set in the competition. The duo prevailed over Hapi Gabriel and Obet Aguilar, Aries Cordero and Cris Hilario, and Macoi Aguda and Manatsu Omori.

Andrew Galvez and Edwin Montoya also have a 3-0 mark, but lost two of the nine sets they played to keep the No. 2 spot. Galvez topped Dick Guintu and Mario Diola, Gabriel and Aguilar, and Noli Santos and Rommel Catalma.

Guintu and Diola are in third place with a 2-1 slate, followed by Saul Gargallo and Wowie Abuel (1-1), Aguda and Omori (1-1), Cordero and Hilario (0-2), Santos and Catalma (0-2), and Gabriel and Aguilar (0-3).

In the men's B doubles, Montoya and Espana are ahead in Group 1 with a 3-1 record, while Santos and Catalma are in front in Group 2 with a clean 3-0 slate. Completing the group leaders are Diola and Narlo Achas, who own a 4-0 mark in Group 3.

In the men's C division, Son Jae Ok and Oh An Yeol are still perfect with their 3-0 record to take the No. 1 spot in Group 1, while Kanata Omori and his partner are in close second with their 3-1 card. Group 1 has Eydie Uy and Noel Wong as leaders with their immaculate 3-0 mark.

In the mixed A doubles event, Galvez and Angie Ito lead the eight-team field with their 2-0 slate. Guintu and Hannah Choi and Aguda and Anna Alvarez have identical 1-0 records for a share of second place, while Gabriel and Malou Malasarte and Gargallo and Marlene Peraja are tied for third with their similar 1-1 card.

Mixed B double leaders are Espana and Merlie Tolentino (3-0), of Group 1, Gary Bandoja and Heo In Seouk (3-0) of Group 2, Hibi and Lucille Lampera (2-0) of Group 3, and Jojo and Jen Savellano (2-0) and Santos and Michell Calleon (2-0) of Group 4.

Results of mixed C doubles and the women's doubles will be published in *Saipan Tribune*'s Wednesday issue.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
y-Boston	49	19	.721	_
Philadelphia	36	34	.514	14
New York	35	34	.507	14 1/2
New Jersey	22	46	.324	27
Toronto	20	49	.290	29 1/2

Southeast Division

x-Miami	48	22	.686	_
x-Orlando	44	26	.629	4
Atlanta	40	30	.571	8
Charlotte	28	41	.406	19 1/2
Washington	17	51	.250	30

Central Division

y-Chicago	49	19	.721	_
Indiana	30	40	.429	20
Milwaukee	28	41	.406	21 1/2
Detroit	25	45	.357	25
Cleveland	13	55	.191	36

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

x-San Antonio	56	13	.812	_
x-Dallas	49	21	.700	7 1/2
New Orleans	40	31	.563	17
Memphis	38	32	.543	18 1/2
Houston	37	34	.521	20

Northwest Division

Oklahoma City	45	24	.652	_
Denver	41	29	.586	4 1/2
Portland	40	30	.571	5 1/2
Utah	36	34	.514	9 1/2
Minnesota	17	54	.239	29

Pacific Division

y-L.A. Lakers	50	20	.714	_
Phoenix	35	33	.515	14
Golden State	30	40	.429	20
L.A. Clippers	27	44	.380	23 1/2
Sacramento	17	51	.250	32

x-clinched playoff spot
y-clinched division

Yesterday's Games

Washington 98, New Jersey 92
Atlanta 104, Detroit 96
Milwaukee 100, New York 95
Phoenix 108, L.A. Clippers 99
Sacramento 127, Minnesota 95
Houston 110, Utah 108
Toronto 95, Oklahoma City 93
Dallas 101, Golden State 73
L.A. Lakers 84, Portland 80

NBA LEADERS

SCORING

	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
Durant, OKC	64	593	488	1793	28.0
James, MIA	68	640	430	1794	26.4
Stoudemire, NYK	67	661	417	1749	26.1
Wade, MIA	66	601	420	1679	25.4
Anthony, NYK	64	558	424	1603	25.0
Rose, CHI	67	596	371	1667	24.9
Bryant, LAL	69	613	388	1707	24.7
Ellis, GOL	69	638	303	1691	24.5
Nowitzki, DAL	60	505	329	1400	23.3
Howard, ORL	67	539	456	1534	22.9
Martin, HOU	68	453	499	1553	22.8
Griffin, LAC	70	584	388	1563	22.3
Aldridge, POR	69	608	317	1537	22.3
Westbrook, OKC	68	515	444	1500	22.1
Bargnani, TOR	60	490	265	1315	21.9
Love, MIN	70	471	412	1442	20.6
Granger, IND	68	462	335	1395	20.5
Williams, NJN	61	405	336	1247	20.4
Randolph, MEM	65	521	259	1308	20.1
Lopez, NJN	67	511	322	1344	20.1

FG PERCENTAGE

	FG	FGA	PCT
Hilario, DEN	354	571	.620
Howard, ORL	539	903	.597
A. Johnson, TOR	260	451	.576
Horford, ATL	437	773	.565
Ibaka, OKC	264	485	.544
Young, PHL	374	689	.543
Odom, LAL	392	732	.536
Humphries, NJN	270	506	.534
Nowitzki, DAL	505	954	.529
Gasol, LAL	498	941	.529

REBOUNDS

	G	OFF	DEF	TOT	AVG
Love, MIN	70	323	770	1093	15.6
Howard, ORL	67	273	679	952	14.2
Randolph, MEM	65	294	525	819	12.6
Griffin, LAC	70	239	609	848	12.1
Gasol, LAL	69	226	473	699	10.1
Humphries, NJN	67	191	484	675	10.1
Okafor, NOR	61	186	405	591	9.7
Horford, ATL	64	161	453	614	9.6
Lee, GOL	60	175	396	571	9.5
Jefferson, UTA	69	193	462	655	9.5

ASSISTS

	G	AST	AVG
Rondo, BOS	57	653	11.5
Nash, PHX	63	713	11.3
Williams, NJN	61	619	10.1
Paul, NOR	69	676	9.8
Calderon, TOR	61	552	9.0
Wall, WAS	55	477	8.7
Felton, DEN	65	562	8.6
Kidd, DAL	69	582	8.4
Westbrook, OKC	68	573	8.4
Rose, CHI	67	520	7.8

TRANSITIONS CHAMPIONSHIP SCORES

PALM HARBOR, Florida (AP)–Final scores Sunday at the Transitions Championship, a $5.5 million PGA tournament played at the par-71, 7,332-yard Copperhead Course at Innisbrook (a-amateur):

FINAL ROUND

Gary Woodland (500), $990,000	67-68-67-67–269
Webb Simpson (300), $594,000	67-67-67-69–270
Scott Stallings (190), $374,000	66-70-66-70–272
Brandt Snedeker (135), $264,000	72-64-67-70–273
Marc Turnesa (90), $180,125	68-67-73-66–274
Martin Laird (90), $180,125	66-70-68-70–274
Roland Thatcher (90), $180,125	68-67-69-70–274
Chris Couch (90), $180,125	69-64-70-71–274
Justin Rose (90), $180,125	70-65-65-74–274
Brendon de Jonge (90), $180,125	69-66-66-73–274
Chez Reavie (68), $132,000	70-70-65-70–275
Stewart Cink (68), $132,000	68-70-67-70–275
Jim Furyk (59), $110,000	67-70-69-70–276
Nick Watney (59), $110,000	66-72-65-73–276
John Senden (54), $88,000	67-72-68-70–277
Sergio Garcia (54), $88,000	68-66-72-71–277
Rory Sabbatini (54), $88,000	67-72-67-71–277
Peter Hanson (0), $88,000	69-67-69-72–277
Garrett Willis (54), $88,000	66-67-70-74–277
Lucas Glover (48), $55,481	73-64-72-69–278
John Rollins (48), $55,481	70-71-69-68–278
Martin Kaymer (0), $55,481	68-70-71-69–278
Matteo Manassero (0), $55,481	68-68-72-70–278
Justin Leonard (48), $55,481	67-71-69-71–278
J.J. Henry (48), $55,481	69-72-66-71–278
Zach Johnson (48), $55,481	70-68-68-72–278
Jonathan Byrd (48), $55,481	70-67-67-74–278
Bubba Watson (39), $34,283	70-69-72-68–279
Cameron Beckman (39), $34,283	71-67-73-68–279
Geoff Ogilvy (39), $34,283	70-67-73-69–279
Jason Dufner (39), $34,283	68-70-72-69–279
Ricky Barnes (39), $34,283	71-67-71-70–279
Brian Davis (39), $34,283	70-71-68-70–279
Retief Goosen (39), $34,283	72-69-68-70–279
Chad Campbell (39), $34,283	69-69-70-71–279
Trevor Immelman (39), $34,283	72-66-68-73–279
Joe Durant (31), $23,650	67-71-73-69–280
Steven Bowditch (31), $23,650	72-68-71-69–280
Woody Austin (31), $23,650	71-69-71-69–280
Charley Hoffman (31), $23,650	68-71-70-71–280
Brian Gay (31), $23,650	67-73-67-73–280
Paul Casey (31), $23,650	64-71-71-74–280
David Toms (31), $23,650	69-68-69-74–280
Marc Leishman (24), $16,233	68-73-72-68–281
Dean Wilson (24), $16,233	71-70-72-68–281
Kevin Na (24), $16,233	69-72-72-68–281
Ryan Moore (24), $16,233	67-69-74-71–281
Spencer Levin (24), $16,233	70-68-72-71–281
Kevin Sutherland (24), $16,233	68-69-71-73–281
Kent Jones (24), $16,233	70-71-66-74–281
Chris Riley (18), $12,943	69-72-72-69–282
Blake Adams (18), $12,943	68-72-71-71–282
Troy Matteson (18), $12,943	70-69-69-74–282
Vijay Singh (18), $12,943	68-70-70-74–282
Ryan Palmer (18), $12,943	72-69-67-74–282
Jason Day (18), $12,943	70-71-65-76–282
Stuart Appleby (12), $12,210	67-69-77-70–283
Bill Lunde (12), $12,210	71-69-72-71–283
a-Peter Uihlein	70-69-72-72–283
Mark Wilson (12), $12,210	70-66-74-73–283
Andres Romero (12), $12,210	69-72-69-73–283
Alex Cejka (12), $12,210	73-68-67-75–283
Chad Collins (7), $11,770	68-71-74-71–284
Tommy Gainey (7), $11,770	71-70-70-73–284
George McNeill (7), $11,770	71-70-68-75–284
Kevin Stadler (5), $11,550	72-69-72-72–285
Shaun Micheel (3), $11,275	70-71-72-73–286
Will Claxton (0), $11,275	69-70-73-74–286
Carl Pettersson (3), $11,275	69-68-73-76–286
Matt Jones (3), $11,275	69-70-71-76–286
Bobby Gates (1), $11,000	72-67-71-78–288
Zack Miller (1), $10,890	71-70-72-78–291

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

FR. MANNY

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Brothers Co. Inc, Saipan Health Clinic/St. Jude Renal Care, YCO Corporation, Songao Enterprises, Henry K. Pangelinan & Associates, HBR International, Inc., Santa Soledad Parish, Good Day Coordinating, Inc., Motion Auto/Ace Auto Glass, Mt. Carmel Cathedral Parish, San Antonio Parish, San Vicente Parish, Santa Remedios Parish, Mt. Carmel Catholic School, San Francisco De Borja Parish, Bank of Guam, D'Elegance Café, K.L. Carr Enterprises, Pacific Trading Co., and Ta Bun Kuy.

Meanwhile, Refaluwash Golf Association is encouraging its members to participate in the tournament in honor of Father Manny, the Marianas March Against Cancer event on April 2, and the Tinian Mayor's Cup next month.

RGA also announced that its March Ace tournament will be played this Sunday at the Kingfisher Golf Links. Check-in time is at 11am, while tee time is at 12pm. The score to beat is Jesse Seman's 70.

RGA added the club is still open for membership. Annual membership fee is only $25.

For more information about RGA tournaments, contact Tars Olopai at 483-5508, Tony Rogolifoi at 288-3515, and Jess Wabol at 288-1129.

For the Father Manny tournament, contact Rick Kautz at 483-9282 or Mike Cruz at 483-7171.

2011 Tagaman Triathlon Swim Leg

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Renata Bucher and Adam York dives into the water off the Pacific Islands Club.

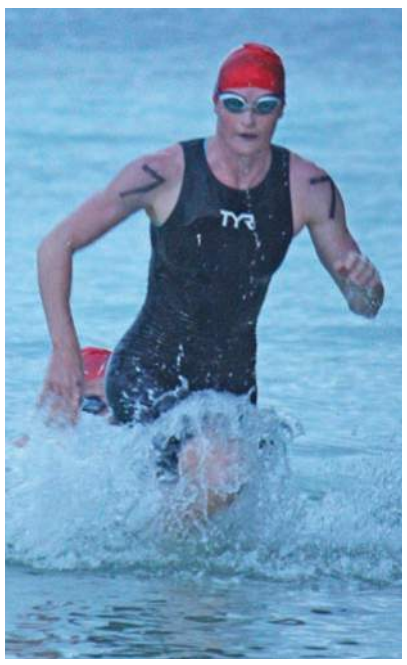
Jeong Mok heads to the swim-bike transition area after completing the swim leg first overall at the 23:02 mark.

Korea's Byun Eun Jeon, right, and Yun Ho Seo move out of the water.

Saipan Swim Club's Kento Akimaru, left, and Nana Umebayashi run to the shore.

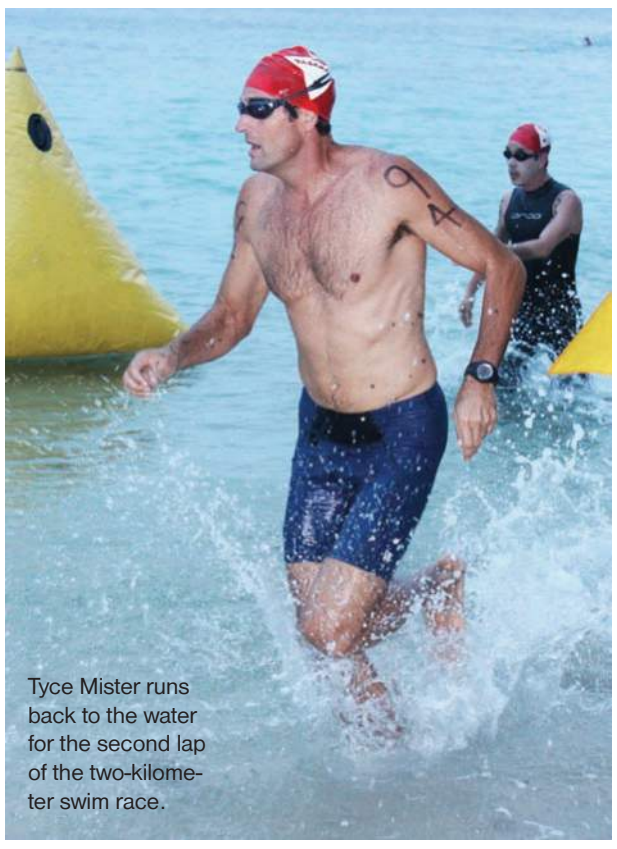
A group of Koreans poses for a photo before the start of the swim leg of the 2011 Tagaman Triathlon on Saturday.

Mieko Carey makes her way to the swim-bike transition area.



Suzy Snyder chases leaders in the swim leg.

2010 Tagaman Triathlon women's champion Dan Bi Hong of Korea takes a shower heading to the swim-bike transition area.



Tyce Mister runs back to the water for the second lap of the two-kilometer swim race.

Sam Gardner goes back to the water for the last lap of the race.

Bryant leads Lakers past Trail Blazers

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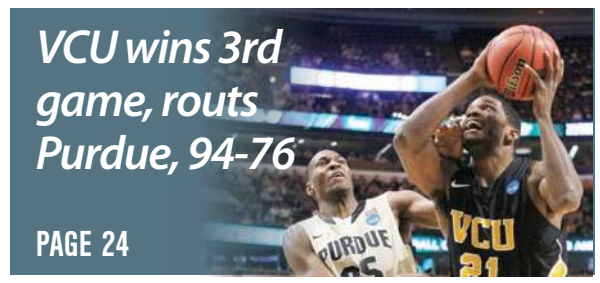
Saipan Tribune
Sports



VCU wins 3rd game, routs Purdue, 94-76

PAGE 24

Wasle, Gardner win PIC Double

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Austria's Carina Wasle had an eventful debut in the 2011 Saipan Sportsfest, as she won the PIC Double, sharing the same honor with the United Kingdom's Sam Gardner.

The 27-year-old triathlete topped the women's division of the PIC Double after posting the best combined time in the 2011 XTERRA Saipan Championship and 2011 Tagaman Triathlon. Wasle submitted the second fastest women's time in XTERRA with her 3:06:33 and then tallied 3:28:55 (third best) in Tagaman for a total of 6:35:28, more than four minutes ahead of 2010 PIC Double winner Renata Bucher of Switzerland.

An exciting countdown took place at the finish line at the American Memorial Park compound on Saturday, as spectators waited for Wasle and company to determine not only the winner of Tagaman, but also the PIC Double victor.

Suzie Snyder was the first female to reach AMP at the 3:20:41 mark to claim the Tagaman title and to clinch the PIC Double crown, too, the U.S. pro prayed that either Wasle or Bucher come in 15 minutes later.

However, Wasle crossed the finish line more than eight minutes after Snyder did, while Bucher lost the PIC Double crown when she fell behind by more than three minutes against the Austrian pro. Before the Taga-

See WASLE on Page 26

Gardner

Wasle

Settsu-Saipan caging still on

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Basketball Association of Northern Mariana Islands and Settsu Red Impulse Basketball Club will still hold the 2011 Settsu-Saipan Friendship Basketball Tournament from March 26 to 29.

Settsu confirmed its return trip to Saipan several days after the tragedies in Japan and BANMI was relieved to hear that the club and its members are safe.

"Due to the recent tragic events that took place in Japan. BANMI halted its plans to conduct the tournament and prayed for the welfare and safety of Settsu. It was not until recently that tournament organizer Gabriel White was relieved to receive word from SRI directors, Mr. and Mrs. Sakaguchi, that SRI will still come back to Saipan and arrive as scheduled for a week-long stay,"

See SETTSU-SAIPAN on Page 26

A Settsu Red Impulse cager, right, sneaks up on the defense of an MHS Dolphins player during the Settsu-Saipan caging in 2009 at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.
ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Arago, Hibi lead men's A division

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The tandem of Ferdie Arago and Gerry Hibi remained undefeated in the 2011 Tan Holdings Mixed/Doubles Badminton Competition to take the lead in the men's A doubles division after two weeks of play at the REM Center in Gualo Rai.

Arago and Hibi hold a 3-0 re-

See ARAGO on Page 26

Ferdie Arago stretches for the shuttlecock during a warm-up in Sunday's game in the Tan Holdings badminton doubles tournament at the REM Center in Gualo Rai.
ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Fr. Manny golf Saturday; RGA March Ace Sunday

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Over 80 golfers have already registered for the 2011 Father Manny Memorial Golf Classic that will hit the greens and fairways of the Marianas Country Club this Saturday.

Registration is still open and participants have a chance to take home a Harley Davidson motorcycle from American Iron Horse/Island Equipment Rental or $5,000 from Traders Insurance, Co. as hole-in-one prizes.

Interested players can register on Saturday at MCC at 6am and pay the $85 entrance fee. Proceeds from the tournament will be used to pay for the medical expenses of the late Father Manny Corcuerra, who passed away in December last year due to a lingering illness.

This weekend's fundraiser is supported by Kautz Glass Company, Kristo Rai Church, Rota Merchandising Co./D.K.

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